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MY EARLY RANDOM HITS

....OR....

"STORIES IN POETRY AND PROSE"

BY

W. WALKER HANNA, M.A., Esq.

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA BAR

A Booklet containing my first original ventures in English Literature, and now offered in the hope that it may prove acceptable to "young people" if not to their elders

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PRESS OF GEORGE DUKES
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DEDICATED TO . . . . .

My relatives the nearest,—

My closest friends and dearest.—

CONVERTED ANEW.

In the little village of K——, in the western part of the State of Pennsylvania, at the house of one of its most prominent, wealthy and distinguished citizens, a little party of young people had met together to enjoy themselves, as only socially inclined young people can. What made it all the more pleasant, for each and every one of them, was the fact that although young in years, they were all old acquaintances, all about the same age, eighteen to twenty years or thereabouts (not much over, at any rate), and all members of the little village church, which, at no great distance, reared its pointed spire towards the sky. With but one exception, perhaps, all of the young people were, as regards their prospects in life, comparatively well-to-do, their parents being the happy possessors of rich, well situated, well paying farms.

Of these last, none extended over as many broad acres or had, in general, a richer soil than that of Judge Latrobe, in whose large, roomy mansion, as we have already observed, so many bright, happy faces were assembled.

Well might his only daughter, Elizabeth, feel a just pride in the old house and its noble surroundings. Full of light-hearted joy, and like some fairy sprite almost, every movement graceful and harmonious, she had moved among her guests with that proper and becoming dignity which bespoke a superior intelligence and refinement.

Elegant as were some of the rich adornments which embellished the family mansion, or which sparkled from her person, more elegant, more handsome, more attractive was the light, lithe, supple form of the beautiful, fair-complexioned young lady who presided therein. Now, as she stood in the hall-way, wishing a "Good-night" to the last of her visitors—a young man of quiet, courtly bearing—some such thought must have flitted through his mind, for, pausing a moment, before he left the door-way, he took her hand, which was extended towards him, kissed it, and was gone.

Hastening down the gravel walk, out through the shrubbery, he finally entered a sweet-scented, glorious avenue of old pines. Here he overtook two of his former associates, who somewhat leisurely were pursuing their homeward way.

"What! Harvey Hale!" they both exclaimed, upon his coming up to them. "How pale you look! What in the world ails you, man? Hast seen a ghost—a spirit?" inquires David Dunstan, the elder of the two.

"Yes," responded Harvey, gloomily, "a spirit that will send me, heaven knows whither!"

"Why, man, you are beside yourself to-night," responded the younger of the two—Dick Darleigh. "Your eyes must have been bewitched by this one evening's unaccustomed splendor!"

Just here, it seems but right to remark, that Harvey Hale, though as well educated and as well

informed and gifted as either of his two companions, was, however, in his worldly prospects, their inferior.

Lured on, perhaps, by the small salary attached to the position, he had, only a brief two years before this, accepted the post of village schoolmaster. By virtue of this capacity, he had made the acquaintance of some of the best people of the place, among others, as we have seen, of Judge Latrobe and his charming daughter.

Good, genial, old Doctor Harris, the rector of the little village church to which we have already in the course of our narrative alluded, thought highly of the young man, knowing just enough concerning his previous career to be well convinced of the faultless integrity of his past life. One circumstance alone puzzled the good old Doctor, and, to a certain extent, prevented that free cordiality which might otherwise have existed between them—Harvey Hale was a a cynic.

Even in his religious tenets there were traces of a sarcastic, satirical disposition that seemed to wither whatever his fancy touched, leaving always the impression that a geyser does—of some pent-up, violent, threatening force within. What might have produced this sourness, this bitterness, which like some underlying strata was ever ready to come to the surface on the slightest disturbance, was ever the question in the little community. And, although a church member, yet that fact hardly served to

screen him from the often expressed suspicion, that one seemingly so indifferent to religious persuasion must be a disguised agnostic.

Ah, well ! Each heart knows its own bitterness, and there are some natures, which, although pure and blameless, have been so misjudged and misrepresented, or have met with so many reverses at the outset of life, that they can take but little pleasure in thoughts or things mundane or common : and happy is he who escapes the symptoms of mental and intellectual apathy which so invariably follow.

Of such a nature was Harvey Hale, and liable to just such a tendency. His early training had been sound and good, and being of a sober, intelligent, inquiring state of mind, he was readily attracted by a religious atmosphere. This continued until his seventeenth year, when, his father having met with reverses in business, the family was plunged into poverty, and thus early in his career he began to be hampered and oppressed by a situation indefinably uncongenial.

Having found it incumbent upon him to act his part, and college being out of the question, he had nobly relinquished the meditated study of a profession and had sought instead means of obtaining a livelihood. For some time his exertions in this direction were unrewarded, and he was doomed to disappointment and defeat, suffering untold mortification from each heartless rejection.

Feeling the poignancy of his position, less on his own than on the family account, for he was now the main support of the little home, his sensitive nature at length yielded and he rapidly grew irascible and irritable, and finally, almost desperate.

Well was it for him, at this juncture, that he obtained an appointment as schoolmaster in the little village of K—— before mentioned, in which position, as we have already observed, a character beyond reproach and an unblemished reputation enabled him to exercise a certain amount of influence of an active, potential kind. This, too, made his company always desirable, and hence the invitation to the social gathering from which he was now returning.

Reaching a turn in the road, his two companions took one path, while he, his spirits somewhat restored by their badinage, took the other, a pathway leading through a dense wood, this being the shortest cut to the humble dwelling a part of which was appropriated to his use. Coming soon in sight of the ruddy light which shone out upon the blackness from its little nook, near the window of his room. He pondered awhile, as if to study the scene, then went forward abruptly, and with a characteristic air of determination opened the door and disappeared within.

CHAPTER II.

A GREAT ocean steamship, under a full head of steam, is rushing along over the bosom of the mighty deep, over that route which usually carries the ordinary tourist from America to Europe—New York via Liverpool. The weather being rather rough, with a high sea running and with every prospect of a storm, her passengers, consulting their own safety, comfort and convenience, are mostly below deck. Two or three young-looking men alone excepted—these prompted, perhaps, by the foolhardy exuberance of youth—endeavor to keep their sea-legs moving with their accustomed dignity, but alas ! with poor success. Away towards the bow, one of these last, muffled up to the chin in a large grey ulster, stood watching the white-capped waves as they broke against the sides of the huge vessel, sprinkling not only the deck, but also his person with the light, foamy spray.

Another individual, now advancing, drew the latter's attention.

"Charley Seldon ! You here, too !" he exclaimed, a moment later.

"Harvey Hale! as I'm alive !" rejoined the other, finding himself thus addressed by the quondam stranger.

"The same ! And now, pray tell me what has induced my old school-chum to take this trip ?"

"Business, my dear fellow, business. Nothing more or less," responded the other—Charley Seldon—to this rather inquisitive remark. "And now," continued he, imitating Harvey Hale's tone and quizzical stare, "what brings you here?"

"Oh, business, I believe; same object as yourself," replied Harvey.

"Do tell! What kind of business, if I may be so bold?"

"To enter public service."

"Ah! Have your friends at Washington rewarded you?"

"In what way, may I ask?"

"Why, in securing you a diplomatic appointment, to be sure!"

"Really, my dear sir, you do mistake me altogether. I have no friends who would, to that extent, interest themselves in me. Besides, it is the military service of Great Britain that I am about to enter."

"You amaze me! What! going to exchange the freedom of a Republic for the tyranny of despotism?"

"I am going from what has been to me the country of oppression—the country of blasted hopes—to the one which, if nothing else, is the country of bold, chivalrous sentiment; and as my ancestors valiantly fought for the flag of Old England, I see not why their descendant should not live or die under its folds."

"Noble inspiration, young man!" exclaimed Charley Seldon. "But remember," he continued, "that you were born an American!"

"True, very true," replied Harvey, wincing slightly; "but my father was born an Englishman, and now my parents, being dead, and my remaining relatives all English, there remains nothing to attract me any longer towards the somewhat superficial civilization of the country I have left. In consequence, I have decided to throw in my lot with a people whose history is my history, and whose aims are not always as mercenary as those of the average American."

"But look at the education which you have received," interrupted Charley Seldon.

"What is that without opportunity?"

"Well, but look at American enterprise," observed Charley, rather warmly.

"For that I care little. Great Britain will just as surely reap the benefit of it, whenever it is not what it seems to symbolize—American fraud."

"But consider," expostulated Charley, "what opportunities may be found on the Western Continent by those who have only to avail themselves of them. Witness, moreover, the great number of men of low station and of humble birth, who, through perseverance, have become successful and famous."

"Pshaw! the same thing may be said of many on the other side; but listen: How many men are there in the country which we have left over

whose ashes the world will weep? Few, I expect. Where, again, are your men of decided convictions, of honest purpose, of sympathetic soul?"

"We have many such."

"Well," continued Harvey, reflectively, "I, at least, have failed to meet them."

"As to that," Charley Seldon observed candidly, "I see you are to have the best of the argument, though I fear you are sadly prejudiced upon the entire subject."

"Shake!" said Harvey, extending his hand. "I am glad, at all events, to meet with one who is of honest mind, and I shall hold you an exception to the general rule."

The rough weather having somewhat abated, and the bell having rung for dinner, the two friends, arm in arm, went down to partake thereof.

CHAPTER III.

RIGHT here it seems necessary to make some slight explanation of Harvey Hale's somewhat singular conduct and utterances. As the reader will remember, we left him in the little village of K——, if not wealthy, at least outwardly contented. But a change came. Falling in love with the Judge's daughter, he forfeited the Judge's esteem, and although his conduct had been throughout quite honorable and correct in every particular, yet this sufficed—this so-called offence—to cost him his position. Unfortunately, his parents having both died shortly before this, he found himself

alone in the world without resources, and not obtaining another situation readily he became despondent, and the natural tendency of his mind being of a morbid character, he had gradually arrived at the not uncommon but erroneous conclusion that a change of climate and of country was necessary. Thus, we can understand how a suspicious imagination, dwelling upon fancied grievances, would suggest his foregoing utterances, and how also it had prompted the wild, if not desperate purpose, which he had in mind. With this brief explanation let us proceed.

* * * * * *

A day of intense, oppressive heat, but almost over now, the scorching sun no longer darts its fiery rays upon the light, sandy Egyptian soil.

To the English army, engaged in a campaign against El Mahdi, the false prophet, the day has been one of wearisome fatigue—of necessary vigilance, of dangerous rencontre and hard-fought battle. Horde after horde of fierce, fanatical Arabs had in vain endeavored to break through the British lines, but how futile their ill-starred devotion to Mahomet, their enthusiastic zeal in behalf of the pretender! Against the steady, unflinching heroism of Great Britain, and the more convincing aim of well-trained rifles, it had availed nothing. True, the army of occupation could not boast that it had suffered no loss, for there were those stretched upon the ground who would rise no more to unite in earth's conflicts.

At least, one brave officer of high rank, would lead his men no more to battle with the foe. Lying upon the field, he held in his death-grip the neck of the Arab warrior whose javelin had pierced his vitals. Each courageous to the last, had died true to his respective faith, the one to be mourned and remembered by a grateful nation, and the other to be, perhaps, even forgotten by his former associates.

The enemy had, of course, suffered the most severely; yet, here and there, could be found the red-coat of loyalty, to prove that the hard-won victory had required a bloody sacrifice.

The troops were now engaged in burying the dead; the medical staff, in caring for the wounded. Entering the hospital tent, in front of which floated the British ensign, an old veteran, with grey locks, wearing a colonel's uniform, approached the couch or cot of one whose days were evidently numbered. Minus an arm and severely wounded from several sabre slashes across the body, lay a young man in the very bloom of early manhood. There was, notwithstanding the contracted brow, which bespoke pain and suffering, a look of intense anguish, an appearance of absolute despair.

"Young man," said the Colonel, "a letter to you, from some friend in America, having just arrived by post, I have concluded it best to read to you its contents, while consciousness yet remains, in order that some consolation may be administered unto you ere all is over. Bravely you

fought in this day's fight, and well do you wear the shoulder-straps conferred upon you of a lieutenant in Her Majesty's Foot. Now for the letter, which is as follows:

"'K——, County of ——, Pa.

"'My Dear Harvey: How could you be so cruel as to leave us as you did; the village misses you greatly, and the old Rector has never recovered from the shock, which shows, notwithstanding your opinion, that he did think something of you. I do believe he regarded you almost as highly as I did. Through Charles Seldon, an acquaintance of mine, who has lately retured from Europe, I learned for the first time of your whereabouts. Pardon this brief epistle, if it gives offence, but return, for my sake, to the village. Leave war and its horrors; my hand, which trembles much at the thought of your danger, again desires to join with yours in friendship and in love.

"'Sincerely yours,

"'Elizabeth Latrobe.

"'P.S.—My father has lately deceased, so I am left in this cold, unsympathetic world alone.'

"Harvey Hale," continued the Colonel, when he had finished the reading of the letter, "your experience of life, I judge from this, has been a very bitter one, and but for me, who happened a short time ago to discover a distant relationship, might have been far worse. Here, however, it appears is one, a young lady, who cherishes for a distant friend a still warm attachment and sincere regard. Can you now say, as I have heard you frequently maintain of late, with so much stubbornness, that selfishness is in all mankind supreme, and applied Christianity, in most cases, a failure?"

"No!" said Harvey, feebly; "frankly, I cannot! This one letter from my truest and best valued earthly friend has indeed converted me anew! This sermon on love proves me most selfish! Write to her, please, and inform her of my state. Tell her I'm sorry that we shall meet no more on earth, but that I die a whole-souled and not an indifferent Christian, hoping to meet her above! And now, Colonel, I thank you for your kindness in befriending me. Your kindness, your friendship and this letter have wrought the change. May the Gospel of Love be made more practical! The Surgeon comes! Good-night!"

"OUR CORPORATION."

We had met together, at least some of our circle had, to form a Society which should have, with various beneficial features, a fund (either large or small) to be loaned at interest to needy members on good or fair security. Not that we had, before this, resolved to become needy in order that we might take advantage of others' bounty (as tramps do), but, then, when it was understood all round that "Barkis," that is to say, "Uncle Jimmy," the man of means in the estimation of our little village community, "was willin'," of course everybody felt like joining, except, perhaps, the croakers,

who are never found joining anything that they cannot immediately see through, and who, canny folk that they are, know nothing presumably of adversity at all.

Let me see ! There was Hodge, to be sure, who had just married, and fancying himself somebody, not realizing his own utter insignificance and incapacity, was after the secretaryship; that is, if Simpkins, the real estate broker, whose indefatigable industry and perseverance in selling lots, warranted to prove gold mines, had made Scrub-town a " place," would only permit it.

There was Snobs, the banker, whom everybody felt should be the treasurer, because, while he owed nobody anything, everybody owed him something—if not money, at least the outward homage and respect which any society, however savage, always pays to " brass and sand " when well mixed.

Then, there was another, a young duck or cove —Sam Slinger by name—who had become by some " hocus pocus " a barrister or solicitor, and who, by reason of his proclivities for those " dark mysteries " known as statutes and decisions of law, it was broadly hinted, was a man who could readily give us a name, a charter and a legal existence. This, indeed, he did do, and then charged a fee later, which almost deprived us of existence, before we saved the treasury, by compromising with him at fifty cents on the dollar and costs, and so, metaphorically speaking, saved " Rome," that is to say, " Our Corporation."

However, the meeting was soon called to order, and "Uncle Jimmy," whose knowledge of any subject was extremely limited, was in due course elected president, that he might make the fine speeches which were to boom things and benefit ourselves; and that he might be induced to regard it as a sort of family affair, "Little Billie," as we called him—a chap who was entirely under the thumb of the aforesaid president—was elected secretary, with this unforeseen result, alas! that at a subsequent meeting he must needs propose, as a co-worker or assistant, old Hodge, who, knowing on which side his bread was buttered, by his recent marriage had allied himself, in some way or other, with "Uncle Jimmy's" family with a view, no doubt, to future possibilities and to the achievement of his pet ambition—to become secretary of something. And so we organized, with a board of managers or directors, which included almost everyone, rational or irrational, whom we had brought into the project.

Perhaps it would interest you, good people, who peruse this, to know how our society progressed. As I was a member but for one year, and at its close had learned so much about association methods, corporate profits, etc., that I fully believed myself competent to write a text-book on the subject, it may now well be doubted whether I am competent to write even this little epistle, as there are "others" in the concern yet, who, with additional years to their credit, should have a wider experience and be, therefore, wiser than myself.

To proceed, nevertheless, the first incident of any importance which took place occurred soon afterwards, at the next regular meeting, when Sam Slinger (the solicitor) arose to say, "that he had just handed a little bill to the secretary for some service rendered." Immediately the fun commenced. It was moved that the bill be not paid; "that no bills be paid, but that they be laid upon the table." Here Sam interposed to inquire whether the document, which he had drawn up and for which payment was desired, would be wanted that evening, as he had almost concluded to return it to his pocket, seeing how his little bill had fared. I need not add that this poser opportunely settled the matter in his favor, and in favor of that higher education which is now entering so much into our daily comprehension, and which by some is denominated shrewd cunning, and by others sound common sense.

Well, "Be not wise above what is written," for verily the day of reckoning came suddenly upon Sam Slinger. He had, it is true, done much to advance the interests of Our Corporation and to make it a success from the start, although he had not, unfortunately, succeeded in ingratiating himself into the favor of Hodge, whose favorite motion to lay on the table he had so signally defeated. So that when "Uncle Jimmy," the president, set out for Europe, to be gone six months or more, we had a premonition, or rather guessed, there would be much in store for us, and we were not disappointed. Hodge, now a mortal enemy of Slinger's, insisted

that he had now become president, though by what means he was delegated to act as such none knew, or could give a reason. Slinger warned him—it was no use. Little Billie argued with him—to no purpose. He either would not or could not be convinced that he was not president.

Of course, I sided with the majority, for I love peace, if it is to be had at any price, and it was moreover a numerous party who followed "Uncle Jimmy" and had now come to look upon Hodge as his prime minister. One thing is certain—that at that time, with the aid of little Billie (who had resigned as secretary), he was decidedly the ruling spirit. And here we come to the grand finale—Slinger resigned. He said "he knew law," whereupon Hodge replied that he knew something better —"his fists;" and so the little affair ended.

When "Uncle Jimmy" returned, he was put into possession of all the facts of the usurpation at once, but with a good grace declared good-humoredly that Hodge was the president, as much so as he was his son-in-law; that he would see that he was regarded as such, and that a solicitor was always in the way and was therefore unnecessary.

Whether this was so or not I will not pretend to say. I can only add that being somewhat staggered at the manner by which this knotty point was settled, I withdrew from the Corporation, with a net gain of ten cents upon my investment for the year.

I do not know whether the treasurer has left as yet for Canada, but I do know that some of the members are fearful lest with so many who have departed for other scenes, he, too, may vanish from view.

As I have been informed since that there is not now anything remaining in the treasury, most of the funds having been expended upon expensive law suits, there is nothing to make away with, and I will still pin my faith to Snobs, the banker, who never had but one share in the concern, and whose only fault, if any, was that he with myself attended the first meeting, and with me became a charter member.

WHICH CHOSE THE BEST?

As published in the *Presbyterian Journal*, June 5th, 1890.

The rich man proudly made his boast,
  More gold shall yet my coffers fill;
The grain, which now my storehouse bursts,
  Must be confined more closely still.
My slaves shall build me greater barns,
  I'll tempt them, while I try their skill,
And for my soul which restless is,
  Shall all things be, just as I will.

The poor man murmured at the gate:
  I'm sick, heart-broken, soon must die,
The dogs have pity, give me bread!
  The crumbs! the crumbs! Don't pass me by.
The rich man noticed, turned away
  With angry look and hardened heart;
His servant threw the offal out,
  With hidden look and hasty start.

* * * *

That night, a mob of desperate men
With rage assailed the rich man's door,
The fainting beggar crushed to death;
Cared they for nothing human more,
Two souls, beyond the grave are met,
One by redeemed hosts made glad.
The other in a fiery Lake,
By anguish tortured, almost mad.

What need to say, which chose the best,
Which won the diadem, the crown!
The rich man's wealth was fickle, false,
Into the abyss, cast him down,
Where now, the glory, once his own!
Where now, the heedless, haughty boast!
The one has fled, the other waits
The condemnation uttermost.

THE SABBATH.

As published in the *Presbyterian Journal*, July 10th, 1890.

Sweet Sabbath, God's own holy day
Yet wisely made for man;
How oft descends the heavenly ray,
To cheer life's weary span.
How often, when by ill distressed,
Doth aid and succor come
Upon the day that God hath blessed—
One out of seven's sum.

Let us observe it then, with care
As doth the Lord command.
Of idleness, of sin beware,
Let labor none demand.
Take heed and study Nature's law,
The wondrous love divine.
Be taught of Him, who bids us pause,
To light the inner shrine.

TRUE SOURCE OF CONTENTMENT.

Published in *The Daily News* of Philadelphia, January 9th, 1886.
(Somewhat revised.)

'Tis not the wealth of millions,
That bringeth peace of mind,
The rich at times, with cares perplexed,
No happiness can find.

Some strive, on field of battle,
To win e'erlasting fame;
But, when at last the goal is reached,
'Tis found an empty name.

Even the king upon his throne,
While low his subjects kneel,
With cares of state, sore overwhelmed,
No joy of heart can feel.

Happy the man, whose lot is cast,
Where he may useful be,
Whose character is such that love
Doth blend with piety.

THE FEDERALIST'S REWARD.

As published in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 16, 1888.

You ask me why I feel so sad,
This pleasant summer day;
While waving bough and nodding flower
Rejoice so blithe and gay.

While all in Nature is so glad,
Why am I musing here.
I grieve to think Rebellion's stain,
Should once have cost so dear.

To think, what men of note and worth,
The brave, the good, the true,
We have been forced to sacrifice,
Without the credit due.

The foes that once confronted us,
Have now become our friends,
And hint that nothing must be said,
For they have made amends.

Our trophies of the triumphs won,
They'd gladly set at naught,
For each of these reminds them now
Upon which side they fought.

Should we obey presumptuous zeal,
To bring about accord?
No! Let not now oblivion be
The Federalist's reward.

PATHS THAT LEAD AWAY.

As published in *Church Chimes* of Philadelphia.

Trudging along a country road one day,
Between rich fields that for the reaper waiting lay,
By many a clover patch and daisy gay,
I came upon a point, from which did other paths lead far away.

Dwelling in fondness on the sweet past fled,
I lingered here awhile, e'er on my way I sped,
By Mem'ry's minion being captive led, to scenes of long ago;
Thus musing, Life is like a dream I said.

We start, and all seems new, and bright, and gay ;
Our friends in company, we haste along the way ;
Chasing the shadows off that round us play,
We heed not care the while, why should we know that paths
do lead away.

Till suddenly, and then we part for aye,
And one goes this fair road, and one goes that some day,
And each, almost alone, pursues his way, still plodding on,
From where those other paths led friends away.

But, though our journey now is oft times slow,
Let's brighter make each path, as to the goal we go,
Rejoicing, let us always good seed sow, that others after us
may see
What beauties we have left for them to know.

MOTHER MINE.

To my mother, MARY A. HANNA, who passed peacefully away December 3, 1895. (As published in the *Presbyterian Journal*.)

Gone from contact with Earth's sorrows :
Gone from suff'ring human ills :
Pain and heartache, no To-morrow
Brings to thee—so Heaven wills.

Though I cannot now recall thee,
Soars thy Soul in safe retreat ;
May I hope that yon thy presence
Watches by His mercy-seat.

Waits to welcome, when His purpose
Is to call Earth's wanderer Home,
And the Mediator's pleadings
Finds me shelter, ne'er to roam.

May my thoughts e'er travel upward,
Visions of true glory see:
As I tread this vale of darkness
Missing most thy sympathy.

May the God, whom we both worshiped,
Keep me safely in his care:
Till with thee, before Him serving,
We meet midst joys beyond compare.

Mother mine, the worst is over,
Earth has parted from thy sight;
Rest thee in the Land of Beauty,
Rest thee in His Love—His Light.

MONOPOLY VS. TRUTH.

The time had come for battle, with a ruthless, scornful foe,
That threatened to devour Her, if she abroad should go;
Would Truth's banner be uplifted? Yes! All hail the glorious sight!
See! It dawns upon the vision! See! It waves among the Right!

For a monster Corporation, with it's franchises ill-gained,
Held at naught a great, free people, its own promises disdained;
Would have taxed all Earth's creation to the extremest bound,
So that its hated magnates might grow rich and sleek and round.

And, one of them, a tyrant was, a bitter, faithless man;
No renegade, no rascal, more traitor in the van;
Whose only aim and purpose was to make his coffers swell
Till oppressions of the people should his banishment compel.

But Truth has donned her armor, her sword is bright and keen.
She will make the false foe quiver, though e'er so base and mean.
She will o'erthrow the mighty, she will cast the robbers out,
She will end the turmoil quickly, hear the people vict'ry shout.

Let Monopoly no longer gain sway or prospect here,
Let the City own its railways, its water works, its piers;
Let the City be a City, not a ramble, shamble town,
Owned by vicious speculators, unshamed by Virtue's frown.

MUNICIPAL REFORM FROM AN EDUCATIONAL STANDPOINT.

If there is any principle through which Municipal Reform can be accomplished, that principle, I am of opinion, will eventually be recognized to be educational in character. Given a permanent organization of the right sort, with this as its working basis, and results cannot but inevitably follow.

Nearly all recent Municipal Reform movements in the city of Philadelphia have apparently overlooked the fact that the citizen must be properly educated up to the full measure of his civic responsibility before he can vote intelligently and from an adequate comprehension of what municipal issues involve.

As the average citizen is usually but little swayed in his opinions by the stentorian oratory which proceeds from the public platform, owing to the fact that he must necessarily, in times like these,

question the motives of those who seek in this manner to influence his vote, some other means must now be found to influence his mind aright in behalf of safe and economical public measures, wise and expedient legislation or sound views of public policy.

The public press, at one time relied on to give unbiased information and advice, has of late signally failed to fulfill its mission in this respect, although it invariably throws much light upon the given subject. The Church holds itself aloof from politics from fear of contamination, although commenting most severely upon existing tendencies and conditions. The universities and colleges teach sound doctrine to their students, it is true; but there they stop. There is really no institution for educating the citizen and voter, as such, in connection with any existing political party, nor am I at all certain that he would attend if there was one.

As the unbiased views of those neighbors, with whose circumstances and prospects in life he is well acquainted, and with whose motives he can find no question, seldom fail to move a non-partisan taxpayer or citizen to cast his ballot aright, may we not take it for granted that associations of neighbors for political purposes upon an educational basis would be a good thing for the community at large. The University Extension idea is to carry education to the very doors of the people, who can ill afford to spare the time to go any distance to

obtain it. This idea of educating the people in their own neighborhoods could be tried with happy success in the field of politics.

The question arises, however, would not the politicians at once offer themselves as fit teachers and instructors, and thus no benefits be obtained? This is true, and it must be forthwith admitted that some measure should be immediately adopted to keep this class, always rightly suspected, out of the movement. The suggestion is made, in order to show by illustration how all these ends can best be accomplished, that in each and every Election Division of the city of Philadelphia, if possible, true reform clubs, composed of the independent and non-partisan element, embracing men of all political parties, be formed, and that the following ten officers not place-holders or politicians in office be elected in connection therewith: a grand sachem and two sachems (constituting the chairman and committee upon political matters, one of whom shall preside during the debates, lectures, etc., in the club on such subjects as Local Option, Prohibition, High License, Single Tax, Referendum, Municipal Ownership, etc.), president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, assistant secretary, debater (who shall select the subject for debate and open the subject by appointing affirmative and negative sides), and a grand sentinel (who shall act as door-keeper and as judge in conducting elections.) The meetings to be private or public, as previously determined upon, and where in any division there

is not a sufficient number of men from all parties of independent views upon municipal questions, two or three or more Election Divisions to combine in originating and maintaining the club for the same.

Not only could clubs founded upon this plan do a great deal towards disseminating useful knowledge, but they might also, should they see fit, influence the result for division officers at the primaries and polls in favor of some one or other of their members. And, to carry the plan further, suppose that each club in a ward sent a representative, serving on its political committee, to a ward convention to consider candidates of political parties for office, with strict reference to reputation, record and fitness, would not some definite results be achieved, that will never be accomplished under existing conditions or by temporary, spasmodic efforts in behalf of individuals. By the moral influence which this balance of power organization would develop and exert, the existing political parties would be virtually compelled to select and nominate proper candidates. Again, each ward convention of club representatives might send a delegate from its number to a higher or municipal convention, or a municipal league, with a view of having the organization, as such, decide in favor of some one or other of the political candidates for office, or, if need be, in favor of an independent movement, thus facilitating the signing of nomination papers, etc.

To prevent any club from being captured by the adherents of a political party dominated by some boss, on the eve of an election, it would be well to provide that the club increase by tens, and that not until more than half that number are on the waiting list shall the vote in reference thereto be taken. To insure that only those of good character join, applications for membership should go over until the next meeting.

Thus, it seems to me, that if you effect a permanent organization of this sort, having in mind the educational principle, you pave the way assuredly for Reform Municipal, and for the presentation, from time to time, of what is really of value, by the respective upholders of Local Option, Prohibition, High License, Single Tax, Referendum, Municipal Ownership, etc. Instead of adherents of these doctrines discussing as segregated coteries their pet hobbies without result, the fashion very often in ecclesiastical matters ; they will then be in a position to exchange views with one another, and, if possible, make like converts and enthusiasts, while working with others for common results political.

Education and permanent organization, of the right kind, must ever go hand in hand in bringing about needed reform.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS.—(Sic Semper Tyranus.)

ONCE in the lapse of ages past there lived a man whose name was Adam, and singular though it may seem, there was not a woman on the face of the globe, nor ever had been. Finding that by a special act of Providence he had been created and that he was alone upon the earth, in accordance with the Divine will, he took the title of sovereign over the inferior creatures, nor was this at all singular since they readily and willingly submitted to him. For quite a time he ruled wisely and well, possessing and exercising the executive, legislative and judicial powers without dispute. But finally, becoming discontented with his lonesome lot (as we surmise) a woman was sent to him. Now did his troubles commence, for although he retained the actual government as before, yet the woman being insinuatingly artful by reason of her beauty, often obtained her own objects and aims. Unhappily, on one such occasion, having obeyed her instructions and set the Divine authority at defiance, it cost him almost the absolute annihilation of his power and dominion, reducing him to poverty and wretchedness and releasing creation from obedience to him, though not completely.

Can we wonder that woman through the long ages that ensued lost many of her natural and civil rights. However, in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century, we are again called to promote the woman above the man, for that is practically what

this talk about the elevation of woman amounts to. Let us endeavor by facts to show that such is the case. What is now demanded? Woman's Rights. Now let us consider the nature of these rights. It is, of course, to be presumed that they do not desire to lose any of the rights, common or special, which they have acquired or do now enjoy. Let us look, for instance, at the employments which woman's labor controls, teaching, sewing, dressmaking, millinery, fancy work, etc. It must not for one instant be supposed that by Woman's Rights is meant the opening up or surrender of these avenues of employment to men. The agitators on this subject may say so, but you will find that women as a class think and act differently. Let us look again at some of the civil rights to which women under the law are entitled. For instance, there is the right of alimony, by and through which she may compel her husband to contribute to her support. The right of owning and controlling property, with special exemptions in her favor. By Woman's Rights is not meant the yielding of these rights, that all may enjoy life in common; no, far from it. What then are the powers which they desire? Briefly enumerated they are these: The right to enter into those employments and professions from which hitherto they have been debarred, and in which men have labored; to become lawyers, doctors, ministers, masons and in all likelihood bricklayers and carpenters, just as their inclinations direct; the right to representation in the government and to

participation in its control without being obliged to perform all the duties of citizenship, that is, they would control the Government while the men uphold it.

Many other principles that they insist upon might be mentioned here, but as these are mostly subordinate, it will not be necessary to mention them at present.

Let us now consider, in conclusion, whether there is anything dishonorable about woman's present condition and whether circumstances are such as to warrant such a radical change in the course of human affairs as is desired. Are the employments open to woman so crowded that they must necessarily enter those of men? I have never heard it stated that such is the case. Again, supposing that women were admitted into the vocations pursued by men, does it follow as a general consequence that they would all be benefited thereby? I am inclined to doubt such an assertion. Granted that women be allowed to enter those departments from which they have been shut out, what must necessarily follow as a result of an over abundant labor supply? A decrease of wages. Of one thing we may be tolerably certain in such a case, and that is, that women, being able to live cheaper, having generally no families to support, will eventually control the labor market. Nor will men only feel the hardship of this. Married women will then, too late, see the error that has been made. And now as to the fit-

ness of women for legislators, history, that science of the past, furnishes us with no clear precedent. Man has always been considered as the one born to rule. He has in all ages and from all time been the legislator and the defender, being called on at times even to shed his blood for the government; and should he not have the principal share in its direction? Woman has a sphere of her own in which to gain glory and renown. Let her devote herself to those fields in which she is indispensable. Let her make the world happier, and better, and brighter; let her begin at home.

A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

(Abstract of an article in the *Glasgow Herald.*)

At a place called Whiteinch, near Partick, at the confluence of the Clyde and the Kelvin, in Lanark County, Scotland, a wonderful discovery has recently been made. There, relieved of the mould of many centuries, a great fossil grove has been revealed, and now lies in all its parts exposed to the eye.

The leading scientists of Glasgow city and the neighborhood have seen these trees, and have unhesitatingly pronounced them the finest collection in Europe. The following are the circumferences at the thickest part of each stem:

1 –11 feet, 4 inches.
1—8 feet, 10½ inches.
1—8 feet, 7 inches.
1—8 feet, 6 inches.

1—8 feet, 1 inch.
1—6 feet, 8 inches.
1—6 feet, 6 inches.
1—6 feet, 4 inches.
1—5 feet, 3 inches.

These trees vary in height, from the root upward, from one to three feet, all having been broken off where the schist ends and where the sandstone begins.

One fallen tree, lying at an oblique angle to the erect trees measures, what is seen of it, 18 feet, 10 inches; while another huge one, only partially uncovered as yet, lies longitudinally and is somewhat like 4 feet in diameter. The floor on which these wonderful fossils stand measures 64 by 25 feet. Geologists (experts) experience considerable difficulty as to the generic identification of these trees, their conclusions differing widely from one another.

Mr. John Young, who, in conjunction with Mr. D. C. Glenn, prepared a paper on the subject for the Geological Society of Glasgow, is of opinion that these trees are of immense age—older than the human race, to which they have just been revealed; older, indeed, than animal life of any kind, with the exception, perhaps, of a kind of leech or earthworm, traces of which have been met with in the surrounding strata. He regards the strata they now stand in as a portion of the fossil coal and ironstone series, and believes that these trees have been covered with 3,000 feet of strata, which after being deposited has again been reduced to a few feet by denudation.

ON THE SELECTION OF A VOCATION.

'Tis done! After much thought and careful consideration the choice of a vocation has been made. Nor is this a matter to be spoken of lightly. In it great interests are at stake; upon it does the individual's subsequent success or failure depend.

The old Roman maxim says that "all roads lead to Rome." But we are compelled to admit that the same is not true of prosperity. Hence it must be an occasion of solemn moment to him who, upon the brink of manhood, stands prepared to throw off entirely the lightheartedness and frivolity of childhood and to plunge into a sea of unknown depth, whose parts are unexplored. Happy should be he whose inclination so positively asserts itself that he may unhesitatingly venture, and without deep reflection, launch out upon the sea of life.

Unhappily, the number of persons who can thus proceed is exceedingly limited. The vast majority, laying what stress they can on signs and omens of uncertain import, ready to clutch at straws, must proceed slowly and painfully onward, feeling their way into their proper spheres.

Life, however, is short, and quickly rolls on the flight of time, so that many, becoming rock-bound, never reach the haven of their hopes. The few that do, congratulate themselves and wonder, when in retrospective mood, however it came to pass.

Many are the disappointments to be borne, and life would be a blank, a dreary solitude, did not an unquenchable, undying hope, the outcome of religion, step in and with mild and healing sympathy bid us look above.

POLITICAL FREEDOM IN AMERICA.

(An Essay.)

It might seem almost incredible that in free America, a country claiming to have the most enlightened constitutional government on the face of the globe, a condition of affairs exists almost too deplorable to mention. What has produced this sad situation may be easily surmised when we remember the causes which hastened the overthrow of the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, whose great cities to-day lie crumbling in decay. Experience, indeed, seems to confirm the hypothesis, that in proportion as a government is free and liberal, so do the rapacious, the unscrupulous, the ambitious, have an opportunity to triumph over the free spirit of its institutions. In this progressive age "*Tempus res mutat*" and the laws of the past give way to the enlightened opinions of the present. A constitution that will not submit to modification may be an instrument capable alike of doing as much harm as it does good, since the interpretation put upon it to-day may give to fraud just the support it requires. The virtue of a law, it is apprehended, lies not in the rule itself, but in its spirit; and as J. Fenimore Cooper, the American novelist, has said: "How can a nation be truly said to be independent that imports its thoughts, as it imports its wares, from abroad, and has not even the spirit to invent its own prejudices?"

In America life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is exemplified in a way quite startling. Individual selfishness, unrestrained, tramples upon principle, and with the aid of wealth, power and influence institutes and maintains a system of slavery unrivalled by the ancients. Bribery and corruption flourish, and bossism rejoices.

Nothing seems to reflect this tendency more than an American election. The nominees for office are often men of questionable integrity, of loose morals and dissipated character. Representing not the American people, but an iniquitous combine or ring, these men are usually elected in the face of all legitimate opposition.

Corporations know their tools, and the average American soon realizes, in despair, what it means to cope single-handed with monopoly. The desire to hold political office at any cost, too often at the sacrifice of friendship, principle, honor and sincerity, is deplorable, and is far more reaching in its influence than is commonly supposed. It has established a standard of morality which, unfortunately, permeates social and mercantile life to a truly alarming degree.

Since it is generally conceded that patriotism vanishes when individual greed is allowed to defeat principle, who can wonder that anarchy progresses? Given a Robespierre, and who shall not say, with Justice Kent, that "When the spirit of liberty has fled, and truth and justice are disregarded, private rights may easily be sacrificed under the forms of law.

A GREAT PROBLEM.

We live in an age of uncertainty; that which was the sentiment and purpose of to-day often ceases to be that of the morrow. Customs, manners, opinions and habits, whether political, social or religious, are changing with a rapidity that is truly surprising. Great questions requiring immediate settlement are constantly coming to the surface, only to be in every way evaded or indecisively answered. Legislation, religion, politics and science are all being daily confronted with issues that never appeared before, and as the mariner's compass, when a magnet is brought near it, trembles and quivers and turns aside for awhile, the people, with each new issue, vainly try to turn aside, to go around, but not toward. Often do we find them ready to accomplish that to-day which they will repent of to-morrow; raging and turbulent a moment ago, but mild and obedient now.

Among the many questions that at the present day combine to unsettle the public mind, undoubtedly that of races is one of the greatest. Passing over the Indian Question, which is beyond doubt a great issue, but one which an honest and intelligent legislature can settle; setting aside all questions of religion, science, etc., it is my purpose to treat only of the position of the government as regards the question, "How shall we legislate as regards the races, African and Mongolian?" "All mankind," says the Constitution, "were created free and

equal ; " and yet this general doctrine has been held not to apply to the African and Mongolian races. Possibly the difference of color was overlooked at the time of its adoption ; at any rate, these people now insist upon enjoying equal rights with ourselves, and it is hard to see, as everything now stands, how these rights can be denied them. One thing is certain, curious complications will result whether they are recognized or denied. The African race, since the abolition of slavery, has acquired nearly all the rights of citizenship, and what few barriers remain are fast giving way to persistent effort. That they should be allowed to enjoy the most of these rights for which they have contended so long is, to my mind, just and proper ; but when we are called to throw down everything, to reduce everything to a dead level, I think we well may differ.

We are asked to admit them to the public schools in spite of race, propriety, manners, morals, prejudice and a host of other natural reasons ; to level everything that savors of distinction, or prevents social intercourse or even marriage ; to admit them into our institutions, charitable and otherwise, and also to forget that there is an average difference in intelligence between whites and blacks. They complain, too, of the discriminations made against them, not considering that the prohibitions are imposed not only upon the one race but upon the other also. Surely that policy is best, even if deprivatory in its character, if it is the best for the public good ; if it

promotes the general welfare and a healthful, moral, social, intellectual growth. The colored race should not ask or expect to receive anything in common with the white race.

Each should maintain itself distinct. What they ought to demand should be equal privileges for each; that is, equal school facilities of as high a grade as is maintained for the white children. As to the right of suffrage and their other political rights it is without question necessary and just that they should enjoy these.

And now let us look at that part of our subject which is so absorbingly interesting on the Pacific slope, the Chinese question. The principal objections raised against the Chinese are that they are morally and socially a degraded race; that they will live cheaper and without the comforts that even the commonest laborer requires, thus being able to work for a lower rate of wages, or when in business to undersell their neighbors, and lastly, that they are heathen and cannot be Americanized. As to the first of these objections I would simply say that the degraded condition of the race is owing entirely or chiefly to outside influences. Can we blame the Chinese for the opium habit? Did not civilized Europe and our own country force it upon them? What with whisky, opium, gun powder and cannon, is it so surprising that the Chinese code of morals is so low. The objection that the Chinese are a heathen people who cannot be Americanized is of small moment,

and in regard to this point I am also constrained to say that we should not too hastily censure them. Have any of the European powers or have we acted openly or justly, honestly or graciously towards this people? Can we wonder that with the treatment they have received and still continue to receive that they should entertain no lofty opinion either of Americans or Christianity? We cannot blame the Chinese race for what we ourselves have made it. Our argument against the introduction of the Chinese loses force when we do this. No, it is only on the ground of expediency that their introduction can be opposed. This other and best objection seems to me to be the only one on which we can rely. We must look at our own people. If they are to suffer either in trade, morals or social intercourse, then will it be proper for us to close the gates against Chinese emigration. And that the introduction of Chinese will in every way be disastrous to the people there can be no question. We have in a measure ruined this people, we must now beware lest they ruin us. Having reduced them to the lowest depths, we must not allow the influence to counteract upon ourselves. Only by acknowledging our policy and conduct in the past to have been wrong and by declaring ourselves firm and resolute now can we successfully meet this Great Problem.

THE DOOMED SHIP.

Still denser grows the murky gloom,
The moaning waves wash by,
As if in dread of hidden shoal,
The good ship oft doth shy.

The captain stands upon the bridge,
The trumpet in his hand,
And waits with weary, anxious look
To sight the hidden land.

So frequently the whistle blows,
With screams loud, clear and shrill,
That all who hear its warning cry
Feel fast their blood grow chill.

Hark, what is that, that o'er the deep
Doth signal with hoarse throat?
Another monster steaming in
Must pass their creeping boat.

Must soon decide midst vap'rous clouds,
Which way to steer and how;
But, hold! Avast there! What is this?
It is a vessel's prow.

Alas, alas, with cleaving stroke,
She deals a fearful blow;
With crashing sound goes crushing through
And cuts her clean in two.

The captain shouts, the crew are called,
The boats swing o'er the side;
But, ere her hapless people board,
She sinks beneath the tide.

To ye who wait on yonder shore,
  Who fondly wait in vain,
What sorrow will the message bring,
  "Collided on the Main."

The fog that now shuts out from view
  All objects on the sea,
Will lift, but never lifts the veil
  That cloaks eternity.

THE OLD OAK'S END.

A noble oak in the forest stood
Firm, erect and strong;
For years it had reared its lofty head,
  Above both flood and storm;
The safe, sure home of the feathered tribe
That there had gathered long,
And of creatures shy of timid look
  That hid beneath its form.

But, with sharp, keen axe the woodsman came
  One bright and sunny morn,
He only saw a massive trunk
  That would the sea adorn;
So he hacked and hewed with might and main,
  Nor heeded Nature's frown,
Till with a fearful deafening crash
  The towering tree came down.

The beasts of the field fled far and wide,
  Dismayed the sight to see;
The birds flew off with wild, wierd cries
  Of requiem melody.
Nor long was it before the spot
By weeds o'ergrown, by wormy rot,
Lay wasted and forgot.

THE OLD YEAR'S DEPARTURE.

The Old Year on the threshold stood,
Looked up to the clouds and sighed,
While denser grew the gloom around,
Deep silence came and reigned profound
With Night so wierd and still.

The Old Year drew his cloak around,
It folded him from view;
Then off the treacherous threshold slipped,
As o'er the same the New Year tripped,
And took a tumble in.

A mocking laugh is heard without,
You are enthroned, it seems to say;
Yet will you find Earth's pleasures stay
But for a year, soon, soon away,
So happy be to-day.

LIGHTS OUT.

Beside the grave a hero stands
Of many a hard fought field,
While near the troops in hollow square
By blue sky stand revealed.
Artillery roars beneath the hill,
Awhile, and then is still;
Then infantry their volleys fire,
And silent pause until
Lights Out, a bugle calls;
Mellow, clear, but shrill.

Lights Out, across the open grave
The echoes faintly float;
Ah, yes, another hero sleeps,
Nor hears that ling'ring note;
The one that's left will ne'er again
With him draw ready rein;
Though oft will he the story tell
Of blood bespattered plain,
Lights Out, awaiting too,
A place among Death's slain.

AMBITION.

And have you found entrance alway
In other minds than mine?
I have from King to Peasant down
At some time in their day.

And did they then, as I do now,
Hold fast thy glittering form?
Yes, till some tempest came at last
And by me swept them past.

Oh! cruel monster, demon, beast;
And would'st thou let me go?
Yes, thou art timid and not fit,
To Earth's high glories know.

THE EXILE.

Away from his country, away from his home,
Beyond the great ocean he sadly doth roam,
And muses perhaps on the land once his own
From which he now wanders an Exile alone.

The songs of the birds and the blossoms of Spring
Cause the old scenes and mem'ries the closer to cling;
While the ashy hued mantle cold Winter doth bring
Tempers well with the heart that no longer can sing.

The land once the theme of his patriot's pride,
For which brave men nobly had fought and had died;
A barren waste now its place has supplied
For the tyrant has entered and long occupied.

Has divided the land, while Liberty sighed,
And his minions the people now mock and deride;
As they groan in their thraldom for want of a guide,
Ah! few can know how the Exile is tried.

TO A FRIEND.

The young look to the future, the old think of the past,
Should you grow old, remember one who prized you to the last.
Yet see you do your duty in this great world of ours,
Love man, serve God; forever true, reach fair yon Heaven's bowers.

PHILANTHROPY'S QUERY.

Brother, pause: is it no use
For us to work and wait?
And do you sneer at those who try
A race to elevate.

What if it should weary
Minds devising good,
To ever hear your murmurs,
To feel misunderstood.

Knowing well, you do misjudge
Whate'er they undertake,
Suppose then for a moment
These should their work forsake.

Suppose that quitting, leaving all,
They should take your advice,
Would you then find it so easy
To make your creed suffice?

Suppose your words believing,
These should do thus and so,
Under your guidance keeping,
Would our world the better grow?

TO FIND HEAVEN.

Go not to the well that soon is dry,
Try not aloft with the birds to fly;
Improve but the moments, as Time rolls by,
Prepare for a World beyond the sky.

Let not vain thoughts your temper try,
Let no harsh words wound Spirit shy,
Endeavor to cheer, whome'er doth sigh,
Not far away doth the Kingdom lie.

A Kingdom, where all is lovely and bright;
A Kingdom, where never doth come the Night;
A Kingdom, where all are robed in Light.
Ah! yes! 'tis Heaven's gates blind the sight.

'Tis only those, that by strength and might,
Resolve they will conquer or die in the fight;
'Tis only those who obey the right
That live soon to wear the spotless white.

That live the glory with One to share
Who died the guilt of a world to bear,
To carry from us both Sin and Care
And give us the right to enter there.

Would you live to enter that Region fair,
Remember! those who will do and dare
Are those who will cross the threshold rare
To taste of its joys beyond compare.

Then turn not aside from Duty's call;
Why should you tarry without the wall?
A Book for the rescued from Satan's thrall
Will show you what lies beyond the pall.

Will show you the way is free to all,
Will show you the Throne in the Mansion Hall;
A Light, it will guide you o'er mountains tall,
Beyond the gate, beyond the wall.

THE MYSTIC FEW.—(A Satire.)

ONCE upon a time there existed in a far off land of the sea a queer and peculiar people, who were known as the "Mystic Few."

Although strange in many respects, they nevertheless considered themselves a highly intellectual people; every second or third man being either a doctor, a lawyer, a literary curiosity or a politician.

All the farmers were botanists or naturalists, and all the laborers and artisans were either mineralogists, geologists, chemists or scientists. In fact the people were so imbued with theology, natural and moral philosophy and an irresistible desire for truth, or rather wisdom, that these and some other of the most difficult subjects were lightly and reasonably regarded.

Now, the origin of this people as set forth in their Magna Charta (truly a great historical production), and omitting the myth and traditions by which it is surrounded and enveloped, and which if given here would only serve to befog and perplex, is as follows :

When, after the conquest of Troy, the Greeks separated to return home, Omachus or Omakus, for there is a difference as to the spelling of the name as well as to its pronunciation, calling some few of his most trusted followers about him, informed them that he was possessed of a great secret; or to speak more specifically, that Minerva had promised that he should be the head of a great people in a glorious country, the very abode of wisdom, and each and every one that followed him would be richly rewarded. In this manner, exciting their credulity, arousing their avarice and inflaming their cupidity, by fair speech and tempting offers he readily persuaded them forthwith to follow him.

Taking ship, after having widely proclaimed their intended destination and extending a free invitation to all the Greek world to accompany them, they finally arrived, after a long but uneventful journey, at the haven of their hopes, this beautiful isle of the sea.

Landing upon the shore Omachus, standing upon a little eminence, thus addressed his faithful followers and companions :

"Friends and fellow-citizens : We have at last happily concluded our voyage. Here, then, will be found a great commonwealth, the like of which the

world has never seen. Do you not feel already the spell of this place? As Minerva hath said, we will have but to imagine that we know and possess all worldly wisdom, and lo, it is ours. A great gift this will indeed prove, for all the world must resort hither.

However, Alyon, one of the bravest and most forward, exclaimed against this. "Would you," said he to Omachus, "have all the world participate in our reward, in our good fortune? Of what use then is learning. We who have toiled hither together will take possession. I appeal to the people." A gesture of approval here characterized the assembly, which unmistakably proved that the speaker expressed but the wish and desire of all to hold an exclusive property as against all comers.

Omachus, when Alyon had finished, bowing obsequiously and humbly to the multitude, acknowledged that his brave follower, Alyon, had spoken justly and indeed reasonably. He reminded them however that they were but few. "While," said he, "I agree that it will be well to confirm and to confine the privileges and powers Minerva hath granted as much as possible to ourselves, yet I think it would be well to admit into our number some few of the strangers that will apply. Recollect that although established and privileged highly, yet, as the Mystic Few, we must maintain that gracious and generous demeanor that characterizes true dignity, for so hath Minerva strangely yet imperatively commanded."

This saying appeased the multitude, and it was forthwith enacted and agreed that inasmuch as that they and their children should thenceforth, according to Minerva, possess all worldly wisdom, they could and might when expedient admit into their number whomsoever they pleased. And so originated the Mystic Few.

Of course degrees or orders among this people were at first unknown, since no one presumed to be wiser than his fellow. But, as after the lapse of centuries degrees began to be awarded in the colleges and universities of other countries and nations, it was concluded that they should have the same. So doctors, lawyers, professional politicians, botanists, etc., grew both numerous and common.

Nor were these merely empty titles, to be borne by the idle and indolent. "Meaningless terms?" No, indeed. To show how they had prospered on the road to wisdom since the time of Omachus and his chosen few, many proofs might be given had we the space. To understand them intelligently you would, besides, have to comprehend a great deal more than you do now. Oh, what theories were propounded.

How delicately, for instance, would the doctors insist "that a bad heart could by a certain mechanical, medicinal and surgical operation be replaced by a good one without any serious inconvenience to the digestive organs." The lawyers, "that half a lie was the whole truth," and the professional poli-

tician, "that Mammon ruled the government and was therefore above all law." One honest farmer, an enthusiastic botanist, usually spent half the day looking for grain at the bottom of his wheat stalks, and for potatoes on the top of a certain tree. Thus one can imagine, readily, their happiness, bliss and flourishing prosperity.

One strange custom founded, upon their admission of strangers to fellowship, was, that when arrived in the Republic of the Mystic Few, the great republic of letters and renown, any stranger desirous of becoming a member of the community and ambitious of achieving distinction and high honor, he was required to appear before a select committee with a certificate of his rank, birth, fortune, lineage, usual state of mind and specified place of probable or intended death. This being frequently a very bulky document, was ordinarily rolled in windlass fashion, and set up before them. If this proved satisfactory, and then could be bound sufficiently with red tape to prevent its bursting open into space, he was then put through the formal examination.

The questions put to the candidate were original and often quite simple, but always couched in such language that two or three answers might invariably be returned. Whether this resulted usually from a desire for an horticultural display of dictionary monstrosities it is impossible to say. However, to return from this digression, if the applicant returned the answer looked for his was a happy case; but if

not, should he become excitedly nervous and give the answer not expected, though equally correct, failure and opprobrium were his. A slave only did he become to the wise and virtuous Mystic Few. It was really as you will no doubt perceive a conundrum examination.

It is recorded that once on a time, and with this event be it known the disintegration of the community which took place soon after is closely connected, a simple countryman, a stranger, anxious to acquire a reputation for sagacity, came among them, who set to work immediately (an exception to the rule) to study the habits of life and language of the people both bond and free.

Eventually finding, however, that the foundation of their so-called superiority must necessarily be pure common sense, disguised though, it might be, by stately affectation or dignified stupidity, he applied himself diligently to combine with common sense a language that would in addition mystify and perplex, feeling sure that by using words and antics of uncertain import he could pass the citizenship examination. From all this we will and must naturally infer that Omachus and pure Greek had long since passed away. For, why a new people and not a new language?

At last the great day arrived, when, having presented his credentials, he is ushered in before the select Board of Examiners, accredited representatives of their fathers.

There was present, among others, Pomponious or Pomposity as he was sometimes called, the chairman; fat, corpulent, jovial, but deep and deceitful withal. Musicale, the secretary, a tall, thin man, with a head too small for the learning it was said to possess; nevertheless he was what one might properly call the second fiddle of the concern. And, lastly, Aristocraticus, the general assistant, whose great achievement had evidently resulted in the growth of a luxuriant moustache.

The first few questions rather puzzled Sanctotus, for that was the name our worthy countryman went by among the people, but he contrived to answer them after the usual manner.

And now happened a strange thing, for he unwittingly made use of several expressions which puzzled the Board. Surely the Board had not been confounded. "Sanctotus, tell us," said old Pomposity, the chairman, "how you acquired so much knowledge."

To the surprise of all Sanctotus replied that he had acquired it in part from the ordinary people or slaves; and in part from the unabridged dictionary, and that he had well studied their every day habits.

"Sanctotus," said the chairman, "thou hast done a shameful thing, in that thou hast listened to laymen, to slaves, and not listened unto us nor sought to learn our precepts. To slaves, practical plagues, with too sensible theories, thou hast hearkened. Well, then, we do not admit you to our

privileges. You may rank yourself with that class, whose company you prefer. Henceforth you may consider yourself a slave.''

''Hold,'' said Sanctotus, ''enough. I had often heard of your people, and glowing accounts having reached me in my own country, I came up hither to verify them. But, know,'' and here he threw off the long cloak that enveloped him, ''that in me you behold a lineal descendant of the Great Ulysses, whom Minerva also has sent to say, 'that unless you throw open your gates to all the world and receive knowledge from those whom she has chosen, will utterly destroy you.' The Mystic Few your fathers were indeed, for they protected the lamp of knowledge from destruction; and in their age an exclusive appropriation had some excuse, but the privilege of enduring wisdom I never conferred upon those who would withhold its benefits from others. Down go your walls ere yet the Romans come, to see such weakness and folly, as I find here among you Greeks.''

And so was the identity of a great people lost, for needless to state they abandoned their policy and a great many the neighborhood to escape the wrath denounced upon them. The threatened punishment led to an almost deserted island.

One of the monuments testifying to former grandeur and prosperity, strangely enough, bears this piece of advice:

"Beware that you infer not, because Fortune has favored you and yours once; that she therefore intends all things for you to the absolute exclusion of all others. For so arises arrogance, selfish presumption and pride.

Omachus truly observed a wrong, though popular tendency. Did Omachus frame and leave the foregoing ineffacably cut in stone? Alas, who knows?

CHANGES; OR, AN EXPERIENCE.

"Cold weather; look out," and Harry Delamere laughingly jostled an acquaintance and hurried on, making light of the snow-ball which flew narrowly by and which his friend's hand had moulded and thrown after him.

And here it may perhaps be necessary to mention that the above scene occurred in one of the largest manufacturing and mercantile centres of the Western World, a city noted for its size and extent and whose industries give employment and sustenance to a large population.

At the time of which we now write an unusually severe and bitter winter had set in. January, 1887, had closed the river to navigation, much to the satisfaction of those pleasure seekers who find amusement in skating, sledding, sleighing and the like. But, alas, a heavy fall of snow now bid fair to spoil the fun for the present altogether. Down it came,

flake by flake, flurry after flurry, until streets, highways, lanes, houses, trees and everything is covered with the soft, white down.

Harry Delamere, the hero of our tale, to whom we have already introduced the reader, had just entered upon his nineteenth year. He was of a rather fair complexion, with features strongly marked; eyes prominent, keen and piercing; mouth straight and firm, the whole denoting one of stern purpose, inflexible will, indomitable courage and perseverance. Strong, hale and hearty he seemed to be. In the sports of youth he had equaled or perhaps distanced his companions, and yet, as sometimes happens, incongruous though it may appear, he was constitutionally delicate.

At the age of eighteen Harry Delamere had graduated, amid the plaudits of friends and to his parents' gratification, from a city college of note and prominence with high honors.

His father, an honest, sober, industrious mechanic, advised him thereupon to cast about for some employment suited to his inclination and ability. This he proceeded to do, but alas, few such positions offered, and with respect to these, invariably, was he disappointed. Now, almost despairing of success in his endeavors to obtain something suited to his attainments, Harry was on his way to a celebrated architect's office, with a letter of recommendation, from one for whom he had at one time acted in a small business way and who was therefore

conversant with his abilities—328 W—— street. "Ah, here we are," said Harry, as he glanced at the number over the door and then at the card in his hand and found all to be correct.

Entering, he passed several offices until he reached the one he was in search of. Hall & Schnapp read the sign over the door. "Is Mr. Hall in?" inquired our hero, opening the door and addressing a sharp featured man who sat in one corner.

"Yes," said a rather sharp voice, "but busily engaged at present. If you have any business to transact, I am his partner, Mr. Schnapp."

Now, had he been observant, Harry should have said: "No, thank you, I will call again," and then have visited the office when Mr. Hall was unoccupied, but taking Mr. Schnapp at his word, Harry gave him his letter of recommendation to read and specified his errand.

"This appears to be all right," vouchsafed Mr. Schnapp, glancing over it. "Now, as to actual experience?"

"Well, as to that, I am afraid I can hardly satisfy you," said Harry; "but still I am bright and learn quickly, besides I am a graduate of H—— College."

"I am sorry, young man, but really you will not suit us; we want a man of experience."

"Well, no harm done, I hope," said Harry.

"Good day," said Mr. Schnapp, and the door closed.

Try again, thought Harry, as he ruefully contemplated his prospects. "Good morning," he observed, saluting a gentleman with whom he was slightly acquainted.

"Good morning," said a voice that indicated little or no recognition, and somewhat disappointed he stood alone and downcast upon the sidewalk of a public square. Suddenly there flashed across his mind the recollection of a place he had omitted to visit, 128 T—— street. "Why, let's see, that is not very far."

Finding the place the name caught his eye, Israel & Co. "A Jew, I'll wager, now for it." Opening the door boldly, he walked up to the firm's private office, and waiting a suitable opportunity, announced himself.

"Aw, be sheated," said a quick, impatient voice from behind a large desk; "I vill be retty shoon."

Harry seated himself as directed, and then, as there was nothing else to do, endeavored to comprehend the nature of the scene around him. Men were busily engaged calling off goods and stacking them upon long counters, while porters and draymen hurried to and fro. Now and then, above the din in the front part of the establishment, could be heard the noise and clatter of ponderous machinery.

Harry, to whom all this was to a certain extent novel, marvelled that amidst all this confusion the book-keepers in the office remained so unruffled and unconcerned. But further study of his surroundings

he now saw must be discontinued. "Oond vot kon you do?" asked Mr. Israel, coming forward at last.

"I guess almost anything my position would require," answered Harry, promptly.

"Goot, sehr, goot, dot bleases me. Kon you do book-geebing?" observed Mr. Israel, and he ran over his requirements. Harry answered generally in the affirmative, and finally to his surprise Mr. Israel said "he was satisfied and would try him for a week." Rejoiced at heart with his success, if such it could be called, Harry, bidding him good day, set out for home.

CHAPTER II.

The first week is almost over, and Harry, conscious that all has gone well, his face beaming with a cheerful glow, is standing at his desk.

But, hark; "Delamere," a voice calls, it is that of Mr. Israel. Harry hastens to see what is wanted, to what an extent is good work unappreciated. "Delamere, I vill wandt you no longer afsher this week, a son of my frendt wansh te position. Shorry to trouble you."

Harry stood at first aghast and stupefied, and then with a muttered exclamation of anger and disgust returned to his books, which he speedily straightened out, resolved at all events to trust a Jew no more.

Weeks and months fly by, years come and go, and Harry has been compelled to occupy himself as a porter in a large wholesale jobbing house; forgot-

ten are most of his past studies, lost all of his gay spirits, the cold shoulder and continued ill success having made him morose.

It was dinner hour and Harry sat on a bale reading a newspaper account of a suit that had well nigh swamped the noted architects, Hall & Schnapp, and would result at all events in a dissolution. The action was caused by Mr. Schnapp's undertaking a contract to build and then failing to comply with certain specifications as to material. So thought Harry, that is the experience plan. Just then an advertisement crossed his eye: Wanted—In a law office, a clerk; compensation small, but excellent opportunity for a student. Address X, 20, P. O. "I'll answer that, anything but this," exclaimed Harry, so going into the office he answered the advertisement, and soon after dropped it in the box.

Three days after this he received from Lawyer Sharegood a note in which he stated that he was well pleased with the answer and that he would like the writer to call upon him. But, why should I so clearly narrate these particulars? Sufficient it is to say that Harry visited Mr. Sharegood and was kindly received by that gentleman, who, in addition to the small compensation for his services, promised also to give him the benefit of a thorough instruction in the principles of law.

And now our hero is amid scenes more congenial, and although receiving but a mere pittance, he has regained his wanted spirits. We will pass over the

uneventful incidents of a year or so full of hard study and laborious work. Harry is looking forward to an early admission to the Bar. Mr. Sharegood both thinks and speaks highly of him ; " he is so quiet and steady," he frequently remarks to his clients, " and seems so thoughtful of late."

Bright prospects seem to await him ; indeed, his preceptor is interested in him.

It is ten o'clock in the morning, a bright fire burns in the grate, and Harry is busily occupied in writing out and engrossing a deed. " Well, Harry, that fire looks cheerful." " Good morning, sir," in reply, as a tall, thin gentleman, with a wrinkled face but pleasant features, entered the room, rubbing his hands.

" Do you know, my boy, we have won our case against old Jacob Israel. The Court holds that, although he had apparently acted in good faith, yet he was culpably negligent and very foolish in signing a land contract in behalf of a company unorganized and whose members were not all bound down to it."

" So, then, Jacob Israel is held personally responsible for the whole sum, the contract price, and Mrs. Silberman will secure a judgment," remarked Harry, calmly, but with some interest.

Truly the artful, scheming, heartless policy of old Israel was now about to receive its just deserts.

Harry's nature was not vindictive, yet he could not help thinking that each mean or despicable act we do seems destined to meet with retributive punishment.

"Mr. Sharegood," said Harry, when that gentleman, for such it was, had seated himself, "will not the heavy verdict obtained cripple the business?"

"I think it very likely; besides, he is now having trouble with his working people, whom he rates not by their ability, as I have heard, but by their cheapness. So, thought our hero, as he retired to the outer room, where his desk was located, it is indeed the case that he who maketh haste to be rich has no scruple about oppressing his neighbor.

"Harry!"

It was a voice of alarm that now called him to come quickly into the inner office. He hastened anxiously forward. Oh, how soon turns the tide on the tempestuous sea of life. Mr. Sharegood, in a fit, had slid from his chair to the floor, while a deadly pallor overspread his countenance.

"Harry," a weak voice murmured almost inaudibly, "I feel that I am going. My old heart trouble has returned. Send for a carriage quickly and call Dr. Harshaw. My brother lives at John's Place, No. 444.

Harry needed no second command; he telegraphed for a cab, and then hurried to the residence of the doctor, which happily was not far off.

Returning, he went immediately to the sofa, on which he had placed the sick man; only, alas, to find him far beyond the reach of earthly succor, face upward, dead. And so his benefactor had gone. Harry had only too recently stood silently, solemnly

by, while his parents, the one followed shortly by the other, passed quietly away and were laid to rest in the silent tomb. His own home having been thus broken up, this was by no means his first view of death.

Well and deeply did he sympathize with that brother whom the dead man had frequently referred to as being the only family tie he possessed.

The doctor now appeared, one glance told him all. Silently he shook Harry's hand. "Death comes quickly, happy is he that is prepared," he whispered, and then in a grave voice told him to stay in the offices while he should telegraph the brother. The door just then opening disclosed the brother. He was already there. So does an accountable impulse of our nature seem to carry us at times right where we are needed most. He had called to see his brother in relation to some business transaction in which both were interested.

Now, as he bent low over the prostrate form that would counsel him no more, he was evidently deeply moved. Harry, touched by his anguish, went forward and took his hand. Expressing at the same time his sympathy, he asked if he could be of any further use.

Receiving a negative reply, and not caring to intrude, he withdrew to the outer office, followed almost immediately by the doctor, who had already narrated all the circumstances to the grief stricken man.

"Ah, this is a sad scene, he seems to feel it sorely," said Doctor Harshaw. "And now, my man, you will remain about for two or three weeks, or until everything is finally settled, will you not? There is no one but you can give an intelligent account of the deceased's affairs."

"That I certainly will," Harry responded, and then as the doctor's farewell lingered in his ears a sense of his now forlorn condition or situation came over him.

Adrift again. Once more a wanderer, without means, without friends. It was hard that this should be his case, he for whom such hopes had once been entertained. Law, he had frequently felt of late, was a profession for which his free, honest, open nature was not adapted. How much more so, now that he to whom he had looked for guidance was no more. Anything that approached chicanery or concealment had no charm for him. But, what would he do?

Endure more disappointments, from futile efforts to secure employment in the line of his inclination and ability? No. He had resolved, vehemently, sometime since, that thenceforth, if possible, no one should have the opportunity to turn him away with an exasperating or sinister sneer, with highly moral advice and contradictory conduct.

Musing, day after day, upon the future, until Lawyer Sharegood's affairs were settled up and concluded, he gradually grew despondent. Life

itself seemed to have little attraction. Of late it had been a stern fight with poverty. Would it not be well to migrate? A change of neighborhood and circumstances, he reasoned, might do him good.

And ere long, perhaps, before he was well aware of it, Harry Delamere had entered upon what promised to be a life of peril and adventure. If leaving college was an important step in his career, this was even more so.

CHAPTER III.

In a little fort in the far West a company of United States Infantry are drawn up for inspection. Determined, steady-looking men are they, veterans some of them who have seen long, rough service. An Indian outbreak is feared, indeed a war party has been frequently descried hovering in the neighborhood, and they have been ordered here to restore confidence and to protect the settlers. As they march out of the fortress, with even step and stately poise, we recognize a familiar form; it is that of Harry Delamere, and he is on his first Indian campaign.

Entering the Army with the fixed intention of doing his duty faithfully and well, he has already secured honorable mention from his superior officers; and, though hardly a year in service, he is already a corporal. His health, too, and his spirits, have wonderfully improved, for he has now something to look forward to—a bright future, for which he is

saving a portion of his income. Moreover, in two or three families he is ever welcome on account of his pleasing frankness and candor, as well as the high purpose which characterizes his life. For, relying on Divine aid, by which he has often been strengthened and supported amidst trying circumstances, his continued aim and endeavor is to live a true Christian life. He has experienced peace, and although storms may come, he feels now that he can, relying on the strength that comes from above, breast them all. Nor does he despair as regards his earthly prospects or feel disposed to murmur at his hard lot. He has learned to believe and trust that Providence will yet establish his way, so that he may yet live in security and comfort, contented in spirit.

On entering the Army, Harry Delamere had met men more scarred by life's struggle than himself. A close bond of sympathy drew him towards some of these, and in caring for others he had gradually forgotten his own ills.

But let us more properly proceed with the incidents which directly appertain to the present narrative.

The little company of soldiers, after a long and wearisome march, approach a dark ravine.

Hardly have they reached an overhanging rock which juts out into the roadway before there is a sharp rifle report, followed closely by a volley from the surrounding banks, trees and bushes. They had

evidently marched directly into the midst of an Indian encampment, for right beyond, situated snugly in a clump of trees and but barely visible to the eye, the tops of their wigwams could be seen. They had, however, taken the enemy unawares, for the military charging them with the bayonet they withdrew, the greater number mounting their swift little horses which had been tethered near by, and thus escaping.

However, some few of the most noted chiefs were taken and the encampment itself environed and destroyed, its occupants being first made prisoners. Strange to say, this was all accomplished with but trifling loss—two men killed and eight wounded. Such was the report submitted to the commandant when the little company drew up again at the gates of the stockade.

One of the wounded, however, was Harry Delamere, who in saving one of the wounded, a young lieutenant, from the scalping knife, had been slightly wounded in the arm himself by a slash from that weapon. It was rather a severe cut, though by no means a dangerous one ; yet officers and men alike commended his gallantry and praised his courage.

He had hardly been out of the sick-list a week on regular duty before promotion arrived, and he was made sergeant. But this was by no means the only outcome of the event which we have noted as so lately transpiring, for a firm and lasting friend-

ship grew up between the man he had saved—Lieutenant Wolff—and himself. With that young man's friends and family, when stopping at the fort, he had always been welcome; how much more so, now that he had in the first engagement so honorably distinguished himself. There was in time, however, another tie added to more closely cement the friendship thus auspiciously begun.

Harry Delamere had on one occasion, at a post where he was for a while stationed, made the acquaintance of a Miss Florence Wolff, a sister of the lieutenant, and her quiet, reserved manner, and polished, lively speech, had at once attracted him towards her. She was now at the fort, visiting the wife of its commandant, once her inseparable companion and trusted adviser. Was it singular that, as the days went by, she learned to appreciate the character of the young sergeant, and to feel flattered by his devoted attentions. Yes, love soon ruled the hour, and a soldier's life was irksome to Harry only on account of the separation from his beloved which it necessarily enforced.

When the day of parting came, as come it shortly did, and the young lady bade adieu to her friends in the garrison, her brother, who had marked with pleasure the course of their attachment, rejoiced greatly when he observed that they parted as plighted lovers, and not merely as staunch friends.

A brief sketch of Lieutenant Wolff might well,

perhaps, be given here. He was a young man, twenty-six years of age or thereabouts, of medium height, but of fine athletic figure and prepossessing manners. Born of wealthy parents, he had imbibed nevertheless an ambition that carried him ever onward in spite of all obstacles. On graduating from West Point, he had resolved that rather than yield to a life of inglorious ease and voluptuous pleasure, he would seek fame and distinction in the army. Such was Harry Delamere's confidant and friend. One circumstance this person felt sure of, and that was that our hero did not like the army—did not relish the life into which by untoward fortune he had been driven. That, in fact, he was at that very moment planning to enter again the busy arena of mercantile life. Whatever his definite projects were, the lieutenant resolved that they should have his aid and encouragement.

Let us now glide over some five or six years. Walking up an avenue of the large manufacturing centre to which we have already alluded at the opening of our story, we finally come across the sign, "H. Delamere & Co., Merchants." Can it be?

Yes; Harry Delamere has left the army and has once more, but in a different manner, launched out on the great ocean of mercantile city life. This time, however, it is as the successful jobber or merchant. His own savings, augmented by capital supplied by his friend and invested economically

and intelligently, have given him a prosperous start in the business world. He is making large profits, and his able financeering seems destined, together with an upright, generous mind, to lead him on to fortune, honor and respectability.

It is rumored, and on good authority, too, that Harry Delamere, or Lieutenant Delamere, for such was his rank when the enlistment ended, is shortly to be married to a charming and graceful young lady of Washington, sister of Captain Wolff of the United States Infantry.

But let us not forestall their happiness, but leave them with hearts overflowing in gratitude to Providence for their prospective bliss.

Harry Delamere, we may be sure, will often ponder on the many and diverse changes in the current of his existence. Often, too, will he reflect upon the various incidents of his checkered career, and upon how a mysterious Providence protected and shielded him from the dangers which beset his pathway, carrying him almost unscathed through them all.

THE YOUNGSTERS' CRUISE: A SEA YARN.

"WELL, boys! what do you think of this?" So spake Dick Rogers, holding at the same time within close view an old and well-thumbed nautical map, on which was depicted various lines, parallels of latitude and longitude, crossing one another and passing through little groups of islands situated in what was evidently the South Pacific ocean.

"What do I think of it?" said Charley Dalton, the first and foremost of the boys to whom these remarks seemed chiefly directed. "Really, I cannot say until you see fit to favor us with some explanation; but to my unsophisticated vision, should you desire to know what it looks like, I would say it appears to be a marine chart, and a tolerably well-executed one, too."

At this his two other companions, raising themselves on elbow from the soft, mossy bank where they had just the moment before thrown themselves, gazed first at the parchment, and then, rather more quizically, at its owner.

"Indeed, Dick," at length spake Jack Barlow, one of the two latter, "it seems evidently the very article Charley has just mentioned, but please proceed with the explanation."

"Yes, by all means, illustrate and explain; for from your look of disdain I can well discern there is something of more moment not touched upon yet!"

exclaimed also Frank Hilyard, the fourth and last of the little group, as thoroughly aroused and interested he arose from his recumbent position and sat upright.

They were strong, healthy, manly lads, these young fellows, to whom a life by the sea, in the little New England fishing village, had given health, hardihood, courage and spirit. Two of the "boys," as we may call them, and to whom as such we will frequently refer in the course of this narrative—Jack Barlow and Frank Hilyard—were strong, strapping, sturdy fellows, whom constant exposure to wind, wave and weather had hardened and roughened. Often had they ridden before the gale in their fathers' fishing smacks, or now and then, as they were close friends, gone out together in a little dory to examine their tralls, or else visit the many little nooks along the coast that contained points of special interest for both.

Being both willing, honest, easy-going, steady lads, it was hardly singular that these traits should have gained for them the warm friendship of Charley Dalton, somewhat similarly inclined, and of Dick Rogers, one of the brightest and most restive spirits in the village.

Charley Dalton, though reared in the lap of luxury and refinement, had not been spoilt. He was hardy and robust, and although, unlike the others around him, he was not much of a seaman, yet he was frequently regarded as such by the little com-

munity, on account of the fine large two-masted schooner yacht that was ever at his command; for his parents being quite wealthy, his father a retired merchant and a man of some consequence, had a few years before this purchased the vessel for his own as well as his son's gratification.

Not knowing anything about sailing himself, he nevertheless thoroughly enjoyed a sail, and for this purpose kept an old salt, an experienced skipper, constantly employed in the vessel's management.

For this reason, we may well believe, Charley Dalton was heartily envied by his acquaintances, who looked upon him, indeed, as a being extraordinary, and more especially so when, in blue yachting costume, he seemed preparing for a long cruise.

Dick Rogers, whose remarks head this chapter, was the son of a deceased naval officer, who, during the Civil War, had greatly distinguished himself by his bold daring and intrepid courage.

Dick inherited, in great measure, his father's spirit. Fertile in resources and expedients, quick in execution and in action, good-natured and lively generally, he was deservedly popular among his associates.

Now, as he held the chart exposed for his friends' inspection, he was clearly not well pleased with the light reception his remarks had received, for if there was one characteristic of his nature more prominent than another, it was his earnestness when

once interested in any subject—when once aroused by anything promising an outlet for his active, energetic disposition. Rolling up the chart, he pretended now to be much affronted.

"Well," he declared, "if you are going to treat one in this cool, analytical fashion, I will go about my business. On second thought, however, he continued, his usual sunny disposition returning, "I think for the benefit of my friend Frank here, and, perhaps (in a doubtful tone), for the rest of the crowd, I might as well explain.

"You see, boys," he continued, not pausing for further comment, "my father, as you know, in the course of his eventful life, met with many remarkable and strange experiences. Well, then, with one of these my story is directly and immediately connected.

"On one of the last voyages he ever undertook, and while in mid-ocean, he noticed one day, at a little distance from his ship, a little boat or yawl. Observing something unusual about the craft, he ordered out his gig and soon had the boat alongside. In it, strange to say, was a man in rough, sailor dress, very weak and quite exhausted. However, my father had him carried up the side and taken to his cabin, where, you may well believe, he was tenderly cared for, everything that human aid could do for one so situated being done for this stranger.

"For a while he improved, and when conversing with my father, often would he express his deep sense of the obligation he lay under to him.

"One thing about him was singular, and naturally enough puzzled my father. He could never be persuaded to reveal his identity, or to say one word as to what had brought him into such a dangerous predicament. 'No,' he would say, when questioned on that subject, 'least said, soonest mended,' and with this all had to be content.

"The third week after the occurrence, however, it was observed that he was visibly sinking, gradually becoming weaker and weaker. Nor was he himself ignorant of this change for the worse in his condition, sometimes appearing quite despondent, at other times serious, but happy. His system had evidently been too deeply shattered to hold out any hope of a recovery.

"At length, towards the end of the fourth week, he sent for my father, to whom on his appearance he gave this chart and related the following:

"'I know,' said he, 'that my time has come, since the doctor's skill avails not. In consideration of what you have done for me, and the kindness you have shown to an unworthy being, I desire, if possible, to show my appreciation of your generous treatment.

"'This parchment may, at some time or other, return you some slight reward for your trouble. It is a map of the South Pacific, and right in that little cove, on the north side of the little island there marked with a red dart, lies much treasure. A vessel laden with a heavy chest of bullion was sunk

right in there at one time, and certain parts of that vessel may now be seen from the shore, for I have visited the spot lately and taken observations. But one other person knows of the spot—a Malay pirate, who by this time has probably ended his career, or at all events, must soon do so. Take the chart, and following the directions given, and those which I have laid down in the margin, you may recover this treasure.'

"Wearied with this discourse, as my father once said, in narrating it, he sank back on the pillow, apparently too exhausted for further utterance. My father, taking the map and placing it with some other papers, wrung the sailor's hand and retired. Next morning, to his surprise, the man was dead.

"This parchment, the identical one which I hold here, and which my father so received, he frequently referred to, but never from the day he laid it away could it be found. Yesterday, looking over some of his old documents, I came across it, doubled up inside of one of them.

"This, then, is my story, and as the Dervish would say, I must stop now to see how it is received and whether you discern its meaning and object. Come now, boys, I have plans of my own; but let me hear your suggestions."

"You feel certain of the existence of this treasure?" interrogated Frank.

"Yes!"

"You do not believe that any reason exists to doubt the sailor's story?" inquired Jack.

"No. Any man in his condition would have naturally told the truth. Why should he have spoken otherwise? What was there to be gained by his so doing? No, I feel certain the treasure is there."

"Well, that being the case," responded Jack and Frank almost together, "let's hunt it up. There's the dory and here, too, is our brawny arms."

"Very good, very good, as far as it goes," replied Dick. "Your offer is very acceptable one way, but unfortunately it will require something more than a dory. This is an expedition that will require in the first place a large stock of provisions and, in the second place, machinery enough to accomplish our object—tools, grappling irons, spades, ropes, chains, windlasses, cables, etc. My idea is for all to go along in the *Sightly*."

"Charley, we may count on your conveying us in your staunch yacht, may we not?"

"Ah! so, at last, I am to have an interest in the matter and am to be consulted, am I?"

"Certainly, my dear boy, she is at your service. Anything else?"

"Do you really mean it?" the others responded, almost in a breath.

"Why, assuredly I do," responded Charley Dalton, warmly. "One who has enjoyed your company and confidence so long and happily as I have

might well, as I do, consider it a pleasure to be able to further your objects. I am quite ready to join you, and although we may find no treasure, we will very likely get much enjoyment out of this trip."

"Well, that being so," said Dick, "let us not delay or defer the cruise a moment longer than is necessary. Let us not parley over the matter, but go about it at once. The yacht can be got ready in three or four days, so that we can set out immediately without further delay. What say you, Charley?"

"I agree I will have her ready by 5 A. M. Thursday, if that suits. Put the question. Ready for the question, ayes or noes, gentlemen?"

"Aye! Aye! Aye! Aye!"

"The ayes have it, then," concluded Dick.

"Well, it is short notice, so I will hurry off and see if my father's smack is in yet," said Jack. "Frank and I will go out to-morrow and help with the nets and then heave ho, my lads."

"Well, I have an errand to the next village, too," said Dick. "Come on, Charley."

"No, I must set out for home; thank you."

"Well, good-bye, old fellow, good-bye all round," and the little company having exchanged the common civilities of the day dispersed, its enthusiastic members taking different directions.

CHAPTER II.

It may, at first, seem rather surprising that these young men, whose ages ranged from nineteen to twenty-one, should talk so carelessly of what to them might mean a separation of many months from home and relatives. But such is the habit, which frequent and sometimes lengthy excursions, whether on land or water, foster and encourage.

To the two young fishermen, therefore, who had already made two or three voyages before the mast, such an expedition meant nothing. Permission was readily obtained.

Gruff old Jean Barlow shook his son's hand and commended his spirit. "Go! Jack," said he, "and bring home the treasure, if it is to be found. And as you desire, with the rest, that the matter shall be kept secret, no one shall learn anything from me!"

In Charley Dalton's home, on the contrary, however, the project was not so favorably received. First objections were made to taking the yacht away for so long a time as the cruise would involve; secondly, his parents were incredulous on the subject of the treasure, and fearful lest some accident might befall their only son. However, Charley so persistently craved permission, representing that he had already compromised himself, and seemed

so disconcerted by the grounds taken against it, that permission was at last reluctantly given and the objections waived.

One condition, however, was annexed, which was that the expedition should not cover a longer period than seven or eight months. As for reaching their destination, the old skipper, who always accompanied the boys, and in time of danger took upon himself the duties of master, could well conduct them thither, as there was hardly any quarter of the globe which, at some period or another in his extensive career, he had not visited.

Dick Rogers, whose guardian was inclined on all occasions to humor him, had no difficulty in obtaining the required permission for the contemplated cruise. Having been allowed to follow the bent of his own inclinations, such consent came almost as a matter of course. Quite bold and free, he with his comrades at once set about preparing for it.

The yacht was overhauled and examined ; everything put to rights. The larder, fully stocked with provisions of all sorts and kinds, and various utensils and mechanical contrivances, assortments of ropes, chains, pulleys, etc., put aboard. Soon thoroughly equipped for a long voyage, the yacht lay ready to receive her crew ; nor had she long to wait.

It is a beautiful May morning, giving every promise of fair and favorable weather. At her slip, prepared and ready for the cruise. the yacht, with

her trim spars, clean deck and graceful outlines, presents in contrast with her surroundings a pleasing spectacle to the eye, as she sways to and fro on the tide, not far from the white, pebbly beach.

The appointed hour having almost arrived, Skipper Norton walks up and down the deck, conversing with young Captain Dalton, as Charley was usually familiarly dubbed by the village when aboard his vessel.

"Thursday, five o'clock, and not here yet, nor any sign of them either," Charley remarks, glancing at the watch which he holds in his hand.

"Hold on a bit," says Job, "not quite so fast, my hearty. See, here they come at last, Dick leading the way."

A few minutes more and the boys were within hailing distance, and rapidly approaching the vessel.

"Hurrah for the *Sightly!*" they shouted, as they drew near; "and there's our captain and his first officer! Three cheers!"

Boarding the vessel, they dove down into their cabins, got rid of their bundles, and soon reappeared in rough sailor dress, prepared for the cruise.

"All aboard! Cast off the lines! Pull in the cable!" the young captain shouted, and soon they were adrift on the tide.

"All ready! Hoist the mainsail! Let out the jib!" he continued.

This was done, and as the yacht paid off lightly before the breeze a loud shout from the village folk

arose, followed by cheer after cheer as the little vessel ran out before the wind.

Indeed, it seemed as if all were out to see them start. With the glass each could make out some familiar face on the shore.

In some way or other the story had got abroad that the young mariners contemplated a longer voyage than usual. Notwithstanding the fact that several of the most inquisitive in the little community had sought by all the means in their power to discover the purpose of this voyage, they had nevertheless signally failed. The only piece of reliable information they could gather was that the boys were bound to the Pacific. This, taken in connection with the fact that their destination was a secret and the objects of their cruise generally unknown, only the more increased and incited their curiosity.

"By the by," at length spoke Dick, "let's give them a salute."

"All right," said Charley, and quickly a report from the little brass cannon in the bow reverberated across the water.

"Now," said Charley, soon after this, when they were at last fairly under way, "I intend to give up my position and to resign the command into Job Norton's hands. Dick and I, when necessary, will constitute the starboard and Jack and Frank the larboard watch."

"Don't you think, Captain Norton," he continued, "that we may safely shake out all the sails?"

"Yes," Job replied, laconically, with a smile, "if you would make better time."

"All right then, the faster time the better. Come, boys, all of you, haul away on the lines," shouted Job, taking upon himself at once the vessel's management.

Heartily, they tugged the ropes, working away with a will, and in short order all the sails were shaken out and the light, staunch craft scudded before the breeze.

Running along in this way for several hours Job, leaving the wheel to Jack Barlow, went below with Frank and Charley to look over some charts.

"Jack, do you know, I think it looks very much like a storm coming over there," said Dick, who had remained on deck to assist his friend, pointing, as he spoke, to some light, fleecy clouds away in the distance.

"I am of the same opinion as you, Dick; I fear we will soon have a rouser, and that before another day is out we will have it upon us, too."

Having thus expressed himself, and being quite well pleased to find that his companion's opinion should thus closely agree with his own, Dick now went forward.

Shortly after Job appeared with the other two at the head of the gangway.

"Boys," he cried, after having taken a hasty survey, "reef topsails! There, that will do," he continued, the boys having executed his orders; "ere long, look out for squalls!"

Chatting over this communication and the probabilities of a gale, with their chances therein, and then over their prospects of finding the treasure, the long hours flew by unheeded.

"I would advise that one of each watch go down to mess, as it will be dusk in another two hours," the old salt now said, breaking in upon them after they had thus for some time conversed; "we are already out about twelve hours, and it will never do to starve, you know."

"Why, Captain, I had no idea it was so late," said Dick. "We ought soon to be off the coast of 'Ole Virginny,' at that rate."

"Yes, my boy," Job responded, as Dick turned to go below, "we have been making from twelve to fifteen knots an hour; pretty good sailing, I think."

When Dick and Jack again appeared on deck, darkness was fast settling over the deep.

"Here, Dick, take the wheel!" called Job. "Jack, you are to keep a strict lookout, and if anything unusual occurs, to call me. Come, Charley," he continued, "we go below. Why, where's Frank?"

"Asleep, forward, sir."

"Asleep! Has he turned in already?"

"Yes, Cap'n, but to tell the truth, he is most likely ill, for I do not recollect his ever having done the like before."

"Well," I guess he can sleep as well there as down below," said the old skipper.

Promptly at midnight Job reappeared on deck.

"Well, Jack, how goes it?" he inquired, walking forward.

"Fairly well, sir, though a trifle misty."

"All right, sir, you may turn in presently." Facing about, Job now walked back to where Dick was standing.

"Here," said he, "you go down and awaken Charley; let Frank sleep on, if he will; it may do him good."

Wearied somewhat from the work of the day, the young sailors quite willingly retired.

"Do you know, I think Frank looks quite poorly," said Dick, when he had at last aroused Charley, "so, if possible, you had better not wake him when you go up on deck. Good-night, old fellow," he continued, crawling into his bunk, and getting a severe bump on the head as he did so, through the sudden lurching of the vessel.

"My, that was a heavy swell! Hope it hasn't cracked an unusually hard cranium," Charley vouchsafed.

"Guess I had better go now; plenty of work up above to-night," Charley continued, as he retired hastily.

"All right; sorry to have kept you here. Ta ta!" said Dick, wearily. "I'm blessed if I shall sleep, however," he soliloquized, "if this bumping and thumping continues much longer." But Dick was alone.

Mounting the stairway, Charley soon stood beside Job Norton.

"Here, Charley, I've been waiting for you," immediately observed the latter. "Take the wheel while I go forward."

"I must caution you to keep wide awake and always on the alert, for it is growing more and more misty," he continued, a moment later pausing on his way and turning half-way round. "By the by, how are all our lights? Are they all in proper position?"

"Yes, sir, I believe so; Dick attended to that."

Going on towards the bow, Job observed that Frank had just awakened. Enjoying the puzzled expression on his countenance, he fell to chaffing him.

"Heigh, ho! my fine able-bodied seaman, at what port did we ship you? Oh, yes, I see, you're one of the crew. May I ask which watch are you in?"

"Hardly know myself!"

"Perhaps it's the dream watch?" suggested Job.

"Very likely; one not down in the catalogue would just suit me, though if the truth must be told, I have been credited to the larboard watch."

"Who has the deck?"

"Don't know. One thing, however, seems tolerably certain," Frank here volunteered.

"And what may that be?"

"I am beginning to feel more like taking life easy than I used to do."

"Well, just as you like," Job replied.

"No, not a moment longer, please you, if it is my watch," Frank exclaimed, springing at once to his feet. "And from the look of things I now apprehend it is," he continued.

Walking a few steps towards the stern Frank discovered who held the wheel.

"Charley, my boy," he exclaimed, "here I am at last.

"Better late than never," Charley responded.

Returning to the bow, Job requesting him to keep a sharp lookout, retired to look over his charts.

Hardly had Job disappeared ere Frank observed the faint glimmer of lights almost directly ahead."

"Port your helm," he cried, hastily.

"Port it is," responded Charley.

"All right," sang out Frank, immensely relieved, as a large, deeply laden steamer swept closely by, so closely, indeed, that Frank could readily, from where he stood, have tossed any light article aboard. Not a soul, however, could be seen on her deck, and soon, phantom-like, she was lost to view.

"Almost thought it was the *Flying Dutchman*," ejaculated Frank, half aloud, catching his breath.

Job now came on deck, and walking aft told Charley to go forward and see whether Frank would take the wheel.

Hello, Frank! Pretty close shave, that! Good thing you were sufficiently awake to give me timely warning," exclaimed the latter as at Job's behest he now appeared at his friend's elbow. "Feel all right now, after your long nap?"

"All right, why I never felt better," Frank replied.

"Yes, but you did look quite ill before it."

"Well, I suppose, tending the nets before I set out must have tired me somewhat, but it's over now, old boy."

"Do you feel like trying the wheel?"

"Why, yes; certainly."

"Well, Job will accommodate you aft. All right, then, I'm off. Keep a close lookout. Ta, ta."

"Job," said Frank, as he took the wheel, "our watch is almost up, isn't it?"

"Yes, in another half hour, but we may need all hands soon, the breeze is freshening."

Hold her a little more to the wind, Frank. There, that's enough. Now, I must examine my charts again. If I am not mistaken we are almost off the Old Dominion.

A few minutes later Job returned, and scanning the dense black clouds that now hung out and surrounded the vessel, his face rapidly assumed an anxious, startled expression.

"Frank, call all hands on deck, we must reef sails," he ordered, hastily.

"All hands on deck! Reef sail!" shouted Frank down the gangway, at the same time kicking an empty tin can thence and throwing a heavy coil of rope upon the deck.

Another moment and Dick and Jack sprang up the steps, taking two at a time.

"What's wanted?" they both exclaimed together. "Have we struck a rock? Been hit by a thunderbolt, or what? That was a fearful racket."

"Nothing but an old tin can and a coil of rope," said Frank, laughing. "I had no idea it would have fetched you so quickly. If you purpose to reef sails in the same sprightly manner Job will be delighted."

"Why, you made almost noise enough to awaken the dead," ejaculated Dick, as he hastened away to assist Job, who had commenced to take in the canvas.

Soon all were busy, and with Jack up aloft working with the others, under Job's directions, the flapping sails were promptly hauled in and secured. Hardly had they finished ere the storm burst over them. The thunder rolled and rattled with deafening crash overhead. The lightning flashed forth in all directions, while the rain descending in torrents lashed the waves into a foamy, frothy whiteness. With the wind howling around her and huge billows at every moment rising under and about her threateningly as if to engulf her, truly all Job's tact and experience, seconded by the able efforts of her

youthful crew, were now necessary to keep the little vessel afloat and on her course. Every now and then, as if to add to the peril of their situation, some great towering white capped wave, larger than the last, swept over her bow, carrying whatever would float before it. One of these immense waves lifted Frank suddenly off his feet and landed him in the gangway. Another caused Charley to lose his balance and to fall plump into a cosy little nest composed of heavy cables, near which, at that moment, he happened to be standing, so that, as Job afterwards remarked, with only head, hands and heels out, he resembled more some aquatic monster, all flappers, than a human biped.

These casualties, however, were of little moment compared with the danger they were in. In fact they came, in time, with several others, just like them, to be regarded as mere matters of course. In this manner, for several days, the vessel had to be kept straight before the wind, which fortunately was in their favor. Little time was there or opportunity afforded for conversation. The boys had too much to attend to for that; besides this, they were too much interested in their craft and its progress to discuss any other subject. The usual routine was observed, but with more promptitude and less chaffing.

CHAPTER III.

As nothing of any striking importance occurs therein we may well, at the beginning of this chapter, pass over the days immediately following the storm alluded to in the previous one. Once again, with a clear atmosphere about her, and over waves dancing and glistening in the sun's bright rays, the yacht buoyantly holds her own.

It is the twentieth day out, and the little vessel is gaily standing in towards the Mexican Gulf. Her crew, entirely recovered from their late exertions, are idly disporting themselves in various ways upon her deck.

"Look out ahead there! a wreck!" suddenly exclaims Dick, who has been leaning over the side.

The others quickly gather around him, while Job, taking the glass, directs his searching glance towards it.

"Nothing but a small fruit-boat, which has lost her masts," he ejaculates.

"Anybody aboard of her?" the boys exclaim.

"No, she appears to be water-logged."

"As the sea is quite smooth, suppose we board her?" Charley suggests; "what say you?"

"All right," replies Job: "these Mexican fruit-boats sometimes carry a good assortment."

Soon the yawl is out, Dick and Frank rowing towards the wreck, with Charley steering.

"Pshaw!" Charley at length exclaims, as they drew near; "I see she hasn't got much of a cargo. Only a few barrels, and perhaps empty at that."

Boarding her, however, they found that although, as Charley had said, there were but some five or six barrels in all, yet that these nevertheless were filled with fine-looking fruit—pineapples and bananas.

"Well, I guess we can go these! At any rate, I move that they be not consigned to the fishes," Charley ventured.

"Let's see!" Frank responds; "we surely ought to manage it in three trips."

"Agreed!" second the others; and in short order, but with more difficulty than they had expected, or that, from the nature of their undertaking, they had counted on; the last of the fruit, barrels and all, was at length transferred to the *Sightly*, and stowed away out of sight.

Shaping their course now somewhat more to the southeast, without meeting with anything further remarkable, the *Sightly*, not many days after this, reached and crossed the equatorial circle.

Once more altering her course, the yacht stood in for the mouth of the Orinoco, which in due time she entered. Having taken in a supply of water here, her crew immediately put out to sea.

On the evening of the sixth day after this, and when well out from shore, Charley, who with Frank was keeping the watch, noticed at a considerable distance away a strange, peculiar glow, like the

appearance of fire. It was a clear, starlight night, the silvery moon casting her soft beams over the still, almost placid watery waste. Hurriedly calling Job, who had retired, to come up on deck, Charley, informing Frank of what he had just seen, returned immediately to his position in the bow. Here he stood, silently contemplating the strange phenomenon, until Job stood close beside him.

"Well, what is it?" inquired the latter, almost in a whisper, as he too leaned over the bulwarks.

"Do you not see anything unusual, out there in the distance?" answered Charley.

"What! a faint glimmer of light?"

"Yes."

"Hold for a moment! That must be something burning out there! A ship, perhaps! Look, too, how it flares up at times! We must investigate this," said Job in a subdued voice; "it would never do to pass a vessel in distress."

Walking aft, Job communicated to Frank, who then held the wheel, what he had just seen, and his fears in relation thereto. Having ordered him to head the yacht in the proper direction, he then returned to the bow. Rejoining Charley, the two of them stood gazing over the taffrail in the direction of the light. A hush, produced in great measure by the dread of beholding one of the most terrible calamities that can befall the mariner, had descended upon both, so that neither dared lift his voice much above a whisper. For an hour or so

they had thus proceeded bow on towards the light, as it flickered before them, illumining the sky and shedding a ruddy glow on all around.

However, they were now rapidly drawing closer and closer, the light meanwhile growing brighter and brighter. Soon they could clearly perceive and comprehend the meaning of the illumination they had so long and attentively studied. What a spectacle met their vision! There, directly in front of them, lay a great, magnificent bark wrapped in flames. How its lurid light lit up the heavens, giving to all around the appearance of day. Hastily desiring Jack and Dick to come up on deck, explaining at the same time the reason, Job prepared everything, lest peradventure there being some one aboard of her it might be necessary to attempt a rescue.

They were now about as close to the burning ship as it was desirable or safe to venture. Lowering their boat, therefore, Job, taking Jack along with him, set off immediately towards her. Soon they were quite close enough to discern whether or not there was anything or anybody alive and moving upon the deck.

"No one; not a human soul to be seen!" muttered Job, after they had rowed around her from bow to stern. "Her crew and her passengers, if any such there were, have evidently long since taken their departure, and yet," he continued, "she has evidently not been ablaze much more than an hour. 'Tis strange we haven't fell in with any of her boats.

Having spelled out the name on the stern, which they discovered was the "Fraulein Friedricha von Hamburg," and having concluded forthwith that since they could accomplish nothing, it was, therefore, about time to row back to their vessel, and leave to its fate the doomed hulk, whose blazing timbers now crackled and sputtered loudly in the flame, and whose tapering masts shone with a weird, ghastly, unwonted glow, they had hardly, in pursuance of this intention, taken a dozen strokes in the proper direction, ere a loud explosion burst forth from the stern of the fiery mass.

Unfortunately, not looking for such an untoward event, both were completely taken by surprise, and before they could place themselves at a safe distance, large billets of wood, with pieces of scorched and blazing timbers, scattered by the force of the discharge, commenced falling around about them. One of these billets of wood, happily not a large one, whizzing through the air, struck Jack in the head as it descended, knocking him over senseless into the bottom of the boat.

Job, almost horror-stricken at this occurrence, grasping both oars firmly, pulled away lustily for the yacht, which being at no great distance off, he soon reached. By the use of cordials and stimulants, Jack was slowly brought back to consciousness, but his companions sorrowfully felt, as they helped him to his berth, that it would be many days ere he would be entirely recovered from the night's adventure.

Job, too, upbraided himself for having needlessly carried another into such danger to so little purpose, deploring the lack of discretion he had shown in remaining for so great a length of time near the burning vessel. The boys, however, could not see that Job had committed any grievous fault ; indeed, they regarded his conduct throughout as praiseworthy, even Jack himself expressing the opinion that Job had acted perfectly aright and for the best. This view of the matter, together with the fact that Jack's condition in a day or two began rapidly to improve, soon had its proper effect on Job, who brightened up wonderfully and was soon himself again. Taking turns at nursing the invalid, the boys soon brought Jack to his feet again, and although at first weak and dizzy, yet in a very short time, comparatively, he was as well and cheerful as ever he had been.

CHAPTER IV.

Not many days after what has already been described in the preceding chapter, during which time we are not for a moment to suppose that Jack's accident at all interfered with the progress or management of the vessel : having pursued their monotonous way, each day almost as unvaried as the one preceding it ; having passed in the course of their journey the Rio de la Plata and the Gulf of San Antonio, the boys were at last well on their journey towards the Horn.

I will not pause to describe their experiences on rounding that promontory, resembling, as they do, those which all others are subjected to who view its frowning, stormy face. Neither will I here describe the sense of relief with which they at length beheld it sink from view in the hazy distance.

Without further comment let us now hasten on to the main incident of the voyage.

One fine July morning a little vessel might have been seen standing in towards a small group of islands in the South Pacific. It was a strange, unfrequented locality for such a vessel. But seldom could the smoke of a passing steamer be seen and rarely in the horizon a single sail. All was a dreary, dreamy solitude. Running close in towards the nearest of the three little islands the yacht approached an inviting little cove with sandy, pebbly beach and drops anchor. We recognize aboard of her those whom we have met before, familiar faces.

Yes, it is the *Sightly* and her youthful crew. At last they have reached the desired haven. Subdued by the deep silence that prevails, the sails having been lowered and carefully reefed, the boys without further ado row quietly to shore. For awhile they cautiously explore the interior of the island, after which, finding it seemingly uninhabited, they now carefully inspect the shore, observing closely the line of its formation.

"Hold!" at length exclaimed Jack, "there's a vessel of some kind sunk right off that point to the left of the yacht."

"That's so," Charley added, "I see her mast tops a little above the surface."

"Suppose we go out there and throw the lead," observed Dick.

"A good suggestion, I think," remarked Frank, approvingly.

It seems hardly necessary at this stage of our narrative to here inform the reader, acquainted as he is with the object of the voyage, of what the little party are in quest of, or of the nature of their present proceedings. Apparently they are now endeavoring to locate the treasure.

"How many fathoms?" Dick ventured at last, when in their boat. Having reached the desired spot the lead is thrown out.

"Six fathoms, here," Jack replied, examining the line.

"Well, I guess a little more forward, she is nearer surface than that. Charley, don't you think we can reach it?" inquires Dick.

"Why, yes, I think so; if, as you say, the chest containing the gold was on deck and near her bow.

"Well, that is the location as set forth in the chart."

Having, as they supposed, actually discovered the submerged vessel containing the concealed wealth, the boys returned to the yacht. Upon the next day and the day following the boys brought to shore the most of the appliances with which they intended to pursue their search. Upon the day fol-

lowing that again the boys erected their tent at a short distance from the shore and beneath some shady cocoanut palms that there flourished luxuriantly. Here, too, when not otherwise employed, they could view the rippling waves and watch their vessel. And now, being fully prepared for it, with everything in readiness, they proceed to investigate further. Dredging with grappling irons and with hooked poles for the treasure, usually sleeping aboard the yacht at night, the first and second weeks glide quickly by without revealing anything remarkable or developing anything to inspire them with confidence and hope. So, working away with a will day after day, growing all the while less sanguine, the fourth week arrives and finds them still engaged in fruitless, unremunerative toil.

Finally, the beginning of the fifth week seems to point to an eventually satisfactory termination. Having disgustedly dragged to the surface more than the usual quantity of worthless wreckage, success at last seems to smile upon them. The grappling hooks, sweeping along, pick up something, something extremely heavy.

"Ah! here it comes, at last!" all delightedly exclaim, as manfully they tug the ropes, holding the weighty load.

Judge of their astonishment, however, when instead of the long looked for treasure they haul to shore a large brass cannon. But little daunted at this, regarding it somewhat in the light of a pro-

pitious omen, the boys continued their search. Again the grappling hook promises to bring to the surface something more than mere rubbish. Disappointed once more; it is but the prow of the vessel, or rather her figure-head.

"What! a dragon-head, skull and cross-bones accompanying! It is the wreck of a Malay pirate!" exclaimed Frank.

"The mystery is solved! No use of searching further, since others have been here before us," he continued.

One other singular circumstance was shortly after this accidentally discovered. The skeleton of another vessel lay alongside that of the pirate. The prowler and perhaps the prey had both alike been buried beneath the waves—useless to search longer.

From all appearances the pirate captain, at some time or other, had very likely returned to the cove in his vessel, and quite probably gone off with the treasure. Soon after which some terrible disaster must have overtaken him. Perhaps, visiting his old haunts once more, his vessel may have been driven ashore and shipwrecked. Perhaps, with the treasure still aboard, discovered by some armed cruiser, she had been chased into the cove, fired upon and sunk, directly over the very spot from which she had taken her plunder.

The treasure might yet be in the hold of the pirate, and not far below the surface. But who could say? All was now too uncertain, too indefinite, and the

boys felt they would have to relinquish their search. Besides, they had no contrivances that would at all answer the purposes of such a tedious investigation, while superadded to this was the fact that by so remaining they might thereby be exposed to some new danger, traces of rather fresh footmarks having been recently detected in the sand at no very great distance off. No; it was time to depart, so gathering their possessions together, and hoisting the old brass cannon, which had been polished and otherwise renovated, aboard the yacht, Job Norton gave the word of command—

"Hoist anchor!" And as the last "Heave ho" echoed from the shore, the *Sightly*, spreading her sails to the wind, bade adieu to the treasure island.

CHAPTER V.

Her white sails flapping in the breeze, the *Sightly* presented a handsome appearance as she pursued her homeward way. On all sides of her a wide, almost unbroken expanse of water meets the eye, the islands which they had so lately left appearing as mere specks on the horizon. On their lee lay a large island, which they were now rapidly approaching. Dick, sorely disappointed in the outcome of the voyage, felt deeply chagrined to think he had been the means of bringing his friends so far for nothing.

All the day he had been unusually quiet, so much so, that his friends were at a loss to account for his depression. They urged him not to worry over the outcome of their adventure, quoting the old adage, that "Circumstances alter cases," but for a while it seemed to have no effect.

Dick, however, was now fast regaining his wonted spirits. Studying the island closely, as they approached it, Dick, who had been keeping a sharp lookout, saw, or thought he saw, smoke arising from behind a little bluff. He saw other signs, too, that led him to believe the island was inhabited. Calling the others about him he pointed out the state of affairs and announced his intention of determining the truth of the matter, as to whether such was the case or not.

Job endeavored to dissuade him, and so did the others: but, full of daring, his buoyant spirit having returned, he remained unyielding and obstinate.

"Well, if you go ashore, I go, too," Job finally remarked.

"Boys," he continued, while they were lowering the boat, "for aught we know these may be savages. Load both cannon and keep the yacht on this side of yonder bluff, so that she may be out of sight."

Job then stepped down into the boat and the yawl shoved off. Marking her progress, those aboard of the yacht soon perceived she had rounded the bluff. They were hardly prepared for what occurred a few

minutes later. One, two, three reports followed in quick succession. Jack, not being able to see, steered the yacht close in along the shore.

What a scene met their sight. There, in the yawl, a little piece from the shore and rowing vigorously, were their two companions, while with them were two others, who, in spite of a well bronzed skin, they could readily make out were whites. On shore a number of dark-skinned, half-clad natives shouted and gesticulated, waving their limbs to and fro in an excitingly grotesque manner as they raced wildly up and down the beach, some few with their bows sending parting shafts after the yawl.

"Why, what ridiculous performances; let's give the aborigines the proper salute," advised Charley, jocularly, as he contemplated this highly ludicrous exhibition of savage wrath. "By the mass," as Shakespeare says, "I think their antics deserve some such recognition. Besides, it's a fine opportunity to test our new acquisition," he observed, pointing to the brass cannon which they had resurrected from beneath the waves and which with the other had been loaded. "Come, what say you?" he continued.

"Agreed," the others responded.

Without further delay, turning the muzzle of the brass gun in the proper direction and taking accurate aim, they fired at a large canoe hauled up on the beach and towards which the natives were then moving.

"That's a good sight, better than hitting the natives," Job shouted, as he clambered over the side, "although, I fear, as it is, they have hardly escaped scathless."

Dick and Frank, helping the two strangers up the side, welcomed them aboard, and in less time than it takes to narrate the yacht stood out to sea. On shore, however, they could plainly see that their shot had had the desired effect, for on launching their canoe they could well observe the crowd hung back and would not for some reason trust themselves in it.

"Evidently you boys have settled the question as to a pursuit in that craft," remarked Job, approvingly, as he turned, spyglass in hand, towards Jack and Charley, who stood close beside him.

Hardly had he concluded ere one of the strangers touched him on the arm. Making use of signs and gestures he directed Job's attention again towards the island. Then, pointing to the yacht, he swept his hand around in a wide circle imploringly.

"What does he mean?" Charley whispered aside to Job.

"Hanged if I know, I never could make out these Portuguese."

"You're sure he is one?"

"Yes," Job continued, "both are.

"May he not mean, is it not likely, his companions are around the bend and on the other side?"

"The very thing. I believe that is just what he does mean," replied Job, musingly.

"Ho! Put the vessel about and wear around to the other side of the island," he commanded a moment later.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded Frank, bringing down the spokes of the wheel.

Approaching the other man, who had been slightly wounded in the arm by an arrow, and whose wound Dick was now engaged in bandaging, Job desiring to discover whether he could converse in English, at the same time pointing towards the island, inquired if there were any other of his comrades there?

"Yaas, Senor, more! Not see here away!" he replied brokenly.

"It's all right!" Job exclaimed. "Dick, he gives us to understand there is more work for us yet!"

"Well, I'm your man for that every time," Dick replied, evidently delighted with the prospect of meeting with some fresh adventure.

All this while they had been tacking in along shore; now, finally, they rounded the bend. There, to their astonished view, rolling and tossing amid the breakers as they thundered over her, lay exposed the dismantled wreck of a large schooner. The boys stood gazing upon this forlorn, desolate-looking object for quite a while, but no signs of life being observable aboard of her they presently took to studying the shore.

"Look further down! See, there's a tent!" suddenly exclaimed Jack, who, perhaps, somewhat

more closely than the others, had been surveying its rough, broken outline, fringed densely with a luxuriant tropical vegetation.

"So there is; you are right," Job responded, looking through his glass. "I see no signs of life there, however," he added, after a short pause.

"Now then," he sang out, when they were almost opposite; "lower the yawl!"

Going below for a moment, he soon reappeared with two rifles.

"Here," said he to Dick, "you take one and slide over the side."

Dick, well pleased with having been so selected, promptly obeyed.

"Now," he continued, "I want another volunteer!"

"Aye, aye, sir!" the rest responded.

"No," said Job, "you are to do as you did before. Load both cannon with ball and lay to."

"It is a guide I want now," he explained, perceiving how visibly perplexed they were. As he said this, Job directed his glance towards the two Portuguese, who stood side by side, silent but interested spectators of these proceedings.

"I go, Senor!" exclaimed the one who had been wounded, and whose left arm now hung suspended in a sling, observing Job's look and comprehending his wish.

"That settles it! Jump aboard, then," Job replied.

Silently and cautiously, their loaded arms beside them, they rowed to shore. The boat grounding a few minutes later, her occupants immediately sprang out and advanced towards the spot where was erected the tent which they had previously espied. Coming upon it suddenly, and to a certain extent unexpectedly, terrible indeed was the scene which met their horrified gaze, as, climbing a rather steep, wooded knoll, they at last looked down upon the open space stretching out before them towards the sea. There, upon the ground, scattered about the tent, their last earthly abode, and lying in shallow, crimson pools of blood, were those who but quite recently had dwelt within its folds. There they lay, in rough, ragged, sailor dress, just where they had fallen, their bodies transfixed with javelins and arrows, in some cases badly disfigured.

Set upon by the barbarous, cruel, bloodthirsty natives, taken by surprise in the night, perhaps, they had evidently been savagely and wantonly butchered. They had, however, not died tamely, nor had they been overcome until after a desperate resistance, for out of fifteen dead bodies, four or five were those of the natives. Unarmed, but with a courage born of desperation itself, these poor, unfortunate, shipwrecked castaways had fought to the last dying gasp the cruel, inhuman foe.

Without a word and seizing whatever implements would best answer the purpose, having first satisfied themselves that no enemy was lurking near, the

three adventurers hurriedly dug a long narrow trench, and one after another deposited the bodies therein. This humane service rendered they prepared to depart, when the Portuguese sailor, who had accompanied them, bending sorrowfully over one of the bodies, all the while murmuring softly to himself, drew from the finger of the dead man a diamond ring and placed it upon his own. What this act denoted neither of his two companions knew, they could therefore only charitably surmise.

"Perhaps," remarked Dick, "that ring, having associated with it some strange romance or history, he values it as a keepsake."

"Yes, or if not, for other objects, perhaps, more likely to prove by it the horrible tragedy," was Job's rather cautious answer.

The trench, soon after this episode, having been filled in, it was high time to depart.

"Come," at length said Job, rather impatiently, "away to the boat ere any of these grim barbarians return."

Cautiously retracing their footsteps, dreading at every turn lest some fierce warrior brandishing an ugly spear or ponderous war club might spring out to dispute their pathway, they gradually descended to the point at which they had landed. Soon again they were safely afloat and rowing back to the yacht, which now, as before, stood in as closely as possible towards the shore.

"Look there! Cæsar Augustus!" suddenly exclaimed Dick, pointing at the same time to a dark

fringe near the outermost turn of the bend, where, drawn up side by side on shore, were several canoes, around which a number of dusky natives congregated.

"Pull away! Quick time!" observed Job, taking in this new phase in their situation. They see us and are launching out to cut us off. I am afraid it is going to be nip and tuck between us," he added.

Silently, steadily, determinedly, with all the strength they were then capable of, they tugged the oars.

"They see our danger and are beckoning from the yacht," Dick observed at last. "There," he continued, "goes a flash from one of the guns."

"Good, that will teach them a lesson," observed Job, as the shot shattered the nearest canoe.

"Pull away; harder, faster!" exclaimed Dick. "The others, not at all intimidated, are gaining upon us. Just see how their paddles fly!"

"That's so, bend to it," Job responded, "we are pretty near up with the yacht. A few more strokes, and with this light breeze, we must soon be aboard."

"They are now pointing their bows to shoot," again ventured Dick, somewhat anxiously.

"All right, so they may," if it suits them," observed Job, defiantly, as the yawl at that very moment shot under the bow of the yacht and swept along the opposite side.

Tying her securely they climbed up the side, rifle in hand. Almost instantaneously, as if by magic,

the sails filled with the freshening breeze and the vessel headed out to seaward. Charley and his companions, aided by the Portuguese, had held themselves in readiness for this, knowing that no time was to be lost. One thing, for awhile, had looked serious, the wind began to die out. Now, however, their prospects were better, and the yacht swinging around flew out before the strong breeze, giving every assurance of getting safely away. Notwithstanding this, as the nearest canoe was now only a few yards distant, it behooved them to have recourse to other measures.

Boom! Bang! rang out both cannon almost simultaneously as a flight of arrows whizzed over and about the vessel. The shot from the larger cannon sped harmlessly over the first canoe without apparent effect upon its occupants. The other shot was more successful, carrying away a portion of the prow of the second canoe and leaving her in a sinking condition.

"No use, boys, we must fight!" exclaimed Job. "Here comes the first canoe. Load both guns again as quickly as possible while Dick and I pick off one or two. Now, my boy, he continued a moment later, addressing the latter, "we do not desire them any closer. Ready! fire!"

Promptly at his word two rifle reports resounded in quick succession and two dusky warriors fell sprawling into the bottom of the foremost canoe, now only ten yards distant. This canoe, somewhat

impeded and not rightly managed, immediately swept round in a semi-circle, allowing the yacht to gradually increase the distance.

"We're safe, now," Job exclaimed; "that was the precise effect I longer for."

We have loaded both guns, shall we fire them?" Jack here interrupted.

"No, not unless they continue the pursuit. If they had only been taught better and were not such ignorant barbarians I would before this have advised otherwise."

Holding their course without further molestation they soon, to their great joy and satisfaction, beheld the island becoming less and less distinct. Nor was it long before night coming on hid it altogether from their view; hid it from the vision, from the eye. Yes, but not, alas, from the mind, one horrible, ghastly sight, not even time itself would be able to shut out.

CHAPTER VI.

SEVERAL days after what has previously been narrated, having made considerable progress on their homeward way, and the excitement of their recent adventures having worn off, the boys were gathered aft, conversing with Dick, who held the wheel, Job being away forward.

"Dick," exclaimed Frank, "you gave us yesterday a fair description of your last visit to the island

and what you then witnessed. You have never, however, so much as mentioned your first visit—the one that proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that it was inhabited. Suppose, now, for our edification and the better to while away the time, you spin a yarn concerning your adventures?"

"Well, Frank, but how then will you know whether or not I am speaking the truth? If you remember, you said yesterday that I was occasionally liable to wild exaggerations. I might, perhaps, stretch my yarn altogether too far."

"Then we will throw you overboard to some whale. We won't stand a Jonah among us," retorted Jack, facetiously.

"Well, boys, if you please, I would rather not be thrown overboard hereabouts. I have seen several large and greedy-looking sharks in this vicinity, but so far not a single whale has crossed my vision."

"Is that the case?" rejoined the others. "Perhaps, then, they have gobbled up some of those natives?"

"Very likely replied Dick; "since they went forth in canoes, but had to swim in. At all events, I would rather not imitate them."

"Well, give us the story of your exploits, and we will very kindly take into consideration the mitigating circumstances of your present situation," remarked Frank, patronizingly.

"Attention, then," said Dick; "if you must have it, here goes:

"Having landed, as you already know, beyond the bluff, we momentarily lost sight of the yacht. Working our way quietly forward, Job, like the wise old sea-dog that he is, cautioned me that it would never do to make a noise, so silently treading in one another's footsteps, Indian fashion, we crept along slowly to where the smoke was issuing. Here we came out on a little knoll, at the base of which we heard voices, sounding to our well-educated ears strangely wild and uncouth. Edgeing our way to a clump of bushes, which there overhung the knoll, we peeped over.

"What do you think we saw? There, seated around a blazing, crackling fire, were about fifty or sixty natives, more or less, apparently holding a council of some kind, while near by, tied to two palm trees, were our two Portuguese.

"Having observed this critical posture of affairs, we were not long in deciding upon our line of action. Job leading the way, we hastened, in a roundabout way, as noiselessly as possible, over to where they stood. Dashing in, we cut the ropes that bound them, and then urging them onward, set out at a rapid, breakneck pace for the yawl, which we reached in good time, the natives at our heels.

"The yell they gave, as, startled by our sudden appearance, they sprang to their feet, neither of us will ever forget—it was so fierce and fiendish. Job fired two shots from his revolver before he ran, and I, frightened almost out of my wits, fired one from mine. This, gentlemen, with the further addition

that by unceremoniously shoving out from the shore, we thereby eluded capture, concludes, let me hope, an interesting story ; or, perhaps, to give it a better finish, if your memories are so short that you cannot recall the rest, I might furthermore add as an extension, that when they would have forthwith put to sea in their canoe and pursued after us, fortunately the sea-serpent came along just then and damaged it to such an extent, that fearful of further accident, they with one accord concluded to remain on shore."

"Hush! that's enough, go on and hang yourself," ejaculated the boys, one after another.

"Let well enough alone and you will have a fine record. Ship ahoy!" Job now sang out from the bow.

"Where away?" shouted Dick, recalled to the present by this interruption.

"Close on our lee," cried Job, as almost immediately afterwards a large vessel hove in sight.

"Why it's a British cruiser," Jack remarked, presently. And so it was.

Aboard of her they could plainly distinguish the marines as they trudged up and down, their muskets gleaming in the sunlight. On she came, her long steel guns protruding through the open port holes.

"Ho! she is heading directly for us," observed Job. "There, her captain is out on the bridge ; she is going to speak us," he continued.

"Hello!" came from her deck, in a loud, commanding tone.

"Well, what is it?"

"What vessel's that?"

"The *Sightly*, Captain Norton."

"Hello," again.

"Well, what is it?"

"Seen anything of a large Portuguese slave schooner?"

"No; but further up towards the tropics noticed a large wreck."

"Thank you; that is probably the vessel we have pursued from the African coast, and supposed for awhile she had continued on."

Both vessels now parted, each pursuing its separate way. Soon the cruiser had disappeared from view.

Do you know, boys," said Job, "I greatly fear these Portuguese we have with us once formed part of that slaver's crew. If so, they are little better than pirates. I move, anyway, that we rid ourselves of them as soon as possible."

"Where are we now?" Charley inquired.

"In longitude 90°, 30′ west from Greenwich; latitude 30° south. I have about concluded to run into Valparaiso and put our passengers ashore."

"Why, just the thing! That would be excellent!" exclaimed Charley and Dick, almost in a breath. Then we could enjoy a hunt or at least a run on shore."

"Well, I will see," Job responded, "but I think you may reasonably count on such an opportunity."

As nothing further worthy of comment occurs to relieve the monotony of the voyage we may here leave them to pursue their uninterrupted course.

CHAPTER VII.

It is the early part of August, and just as the sun is setting over the harbor of Valparaiso, a little yacht glides in and drops anchor. A boat is then lowered and into her climb four men, who immediately set out for shore. Soon two of them return and row back to the vessel; the others, two Portuguese sailors, have parted from her to return no more. We can guess the rest. The little yacht is the *Sightly*. Once more, after a long journey, in a civilized, inhabited port.

The next day, at sunrise, three of her crew come ashore. They are Job, Charley and Dick. Each carries a rifle and each evidently expects to get a crack at game of some kind or another.

The Custom House inspection completed, and the object and purpose of their present expedition explained, they walk on through the poorly built town. Having passed quite a number of wooden shanties they reach at length the railway depot, and soon are steaming away towards Santiago. Reaching that point, after a ride through and by the most noble and picturesque scenery, they take the main road

that leads over the Andes to Mendoza. Trudging along this road for quite a distance Charley, at length, inquires "if it will not now do to strike off in some other direction?"

"Yes!" Job replies.

So the little party, Job leading the way, diverge from the main road and enter a bypath leading down through a forest of Aurcanian pines, dotted here and there with a carob tree, an oak, or some other variety. Having continued on for quite a while in silence, not meeting or seeing a single creature, with the exception, perhaps, of a lone turkey buzzard or some far away condor sweeping among the clouds, Job suddenly commanded them to halt.

"Hist!" said he. "Did you hear that?"

"No!" answered the others. "What did it sound like?"

"Like the tread of some wild animal. I thought, too, I heard a twig snap."

"Ha! there it is, and no mistake, he added. "Do you hear that growl?"

"Yes! What is it?"

"Don't know! See, there it is crouching under that cypress over by the ravine."

"Why, that looks like a large cat!" remarked Dick; at any rate, it belongs to the Feliadae."

"Hold! I know what it is," exclaimed Charley. "It's a cougar."

Cautiously and with cocked rifles they now advanced towards the cypress, the cougar snarling and snapping its teeth meanwhile quite viciously.

Right below the road lay a deep, but narrow gulch or ravine, through which a little mountain stream meandered. The cougar, observing its foes approaching, immediately sprang for a narrow ledge, which projected from the other side. But alas! too late. Three reports rang out on the still air, and with one loud, prolonged howl the cougar fell dead and rolled over and over down the slope.

"Dead! dead as a door-nail!" exclaimed both the boys together.

"Now," observed Job, "how shall we bag our game? But for that last fool trick, we might now have had him."

"Stop," cried Dick, "I think I have it. There is, a little further on, a ragged, but quite a gradual descent. Right out there the gully widens, and we can there get down without much difficulty."

After one or two ineffectual attempts, the little party finally discovered a point from which they could safely descend. Reaching the cougar, they skinned it, and leaving the carcase, retraced their footsteps just as two large vultures swooped down upon it. As they did so, Dick, sauntering along, noticed on the ground, in among the rocks, over which murmured the swift-running little brooklet, something which shone with a bright, attractive lustre. Hastening over, he picked it up, aware the next moment of its nature.

"Job!" he cried. "Charley! look here. I have found a large gold nugget!"

"So you have," said Job, scanning it closely. "It is worth, too, a snug little sum! Such finds are not altogether unusual in this country, however. These small streams," he continued, "frequently flow through a rich gold region, and often nuggets such as this are washed along for several miles."

With this observation all three, including Job, indulged in a thorough search for the precious metal; which, in the end, as if to confirm Job's previous remark, proved fruitless, no other golden nugget being discovered.

Wrapping the nugget up in the cougar skin, it being then late in the afternoon, they set out for the yacht, which without further adventure they finally reached just as the day was drawing to a close. highly delighted with their short inland tour and its results, after having keenly enjoyed the pure mountain air and the rough scenery. One thing they could not help noticing as they passed through the city of Valparaiso, and that was the scarcity of fine-looking, commodious buildings. In some places the buildings, even those of a public character, were all cracks and seams, caused, perhaps, by the Spanish bombardment of the city in years gone by, or else, latterly, by the frequent and severe earthquake shocks. However, feeling much fatigued, they were glad to get back to the vessel, and after exhibiting the skin and their find retired to their berths.

Early the next day, water and other supplies having been taken aboard, Job, who in spite of the test his sea-legs had been subjected to the day previous, felt none the worse for his experience, gave the order to "weigh anchor," and the yacht with white sails set ran out before the breeze, and before long the harbor of Valparaiso, with the sloping city by its side, had faded from view.

"I once heard a curious tale connected with that city," said Job, turning to the boys, when at last they could but dimly make out the far away coast.

"As you by this time probably well know, it is a custom with the Chinese government to behead or otherwise dispose of those diplomatists or other officers who incur the emperor's displeasure, or whose views upon the governmental policy do not quite coincide with those of the central and supreme administration. Thus, if a Chinese minister signs or approves of a treaty which is not ratified by the home government, he knows what to expect.

"Well, to proceed with my story. Once on a time, a minister to one of the more northern States of this our western world, one Tyng Shoen by name, having the misfortune to be thus situated, and expecting every day a letter of recall, concluded that the proper moment had arrived to visit Chili, a country in which, all at once, he had become, or professed to have become, exceedingly interested. So visit Chili he accordingly did, stopping at Val-

paraiso, which place suited him so well that forgetful of the entanglements of State, he made it his permanent residence, being not only treated with great respect and kindly consideration, but also being held in high honor all the rest of his days, his government, on account of some peculiar notions regarding etiquette, not being willing to recall him until he should have returned to his post."

"A fine way that of outwitting the government," said Dick, after the short pause which succeeded this narrative. "I suppose, too, that being an ambassador he could trade pretty freely on credit?"

"Certainly."

"Job," said Charley, changing the subject, "I have heard there is a province in Chili in which rain never falls; is that so, or is it merely an idle tale, without foundation?"

"No," Job responded, "it is an actual fact. Northward from the city of Valparaiso, in the province of Coquimbo, rain is unknown!"

"How, then, can they cultivate anything?"

"Oh, that is easy enough on account of the very heavy dews!"

"Job, you're a jewel!" said Charley, as Job strode forward. "We will have to have you give us a good story, some time before the cruise is over."

"Just as you like; not a hard task, since you seem so willing to swallow anything and everything, truth and fiction alike," Job remarked as he left the little circle.

Shortly after this, Job's gruff voice required them to reef the topsails, and for a while they were kept quite busy. Soon darkness settled over them, and as the necessary watches had to be kept, there was no further opportunity for conversation.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FEW days after the conversation, as related in the preceding chapter, the *Sightly*, with jib and foresail set, having entered and passed through the Straits of Magellan, close in along the shore of Desolation Island, having sailed by the island of Terra del Fuego, with its rugged outline, the snow-capped Andes of the mainland forming a magnificent and majestic background, launched forth once more upon the Atlantic.

"Heading to the northwest, and scudding lightly before a stiff breeze, they had, not long after, almost arrived off the Falkland Islands, when Charley, who at the time was forward, suddenly sang out, "Sail ahead!"

As they approached, they observed she was an American man-of-war, and also that her boats were out and lying off a wreck not far distant.

"Out with our colors!" shouted Job, and soon the Stars and Stripes floated from the peak. The man-of-war, as they flew by, volunteered them a salute. Almost immediately afterwards, a loud

report sounded across the waves. Looking in the direction of the sound, to where the boats'-crews were at work, a grand spectacle met their sight.

The boats' crews, in performing their work, having charged the wreck and lit the fuse, had then retired to a safe distance, the explosion, which immediately followed being the result of their operations. The boys stood watching the shattered timbers as amid a lurid light they could be seen flying in all directions.

"So has probably ended a noble, useful career," remarked Job, wiping away a tear from the corner of his eye. "I always feel sad somehow or other," he continued, "when I see what has once been a sailor's home sink forever beneath the waves."

The boys, although they said nothing, felt much of the same sentiment that the old salt's words expressed. From their reverie they were all at once aroused by Frank, who, pointing towards a large, dark object floating at some distance off, declared it, in his opinion, to be a whale.

"Hold on," said Job, "if yonder is a whale, it must be a dead one. No live whale lies as still as that." Then, putting the glass to his eye, a broad grin gradually overspread his swarthy visage. "A whale, indeed!" he continued, with a loud ha! ha! "Why, it's only some wreckage, a mast or so, with rigging attached.

"Well," said Frank, as he faced about to return to the forecastle, "it certainly looked like one."

"Yes," assented Job, I was almost taken in myself."

Upon taking the wheel the boys gathered around him and listened for awhile to one or two experiences he had met with while out whale hunting.

"Boys," he said at last, breaking off abruptly, "if we keep a sharp lookout we ought surely to see one of these creatures before another day is out."

They had almost forgotten this latter remark, when the next day, just as the sun was sinking low in the western horizon, the little group, having met together precisely as on the day before, and looking towards its broad disc suddenly saw a stream of water shoot up from the sea.

"There she blows!" Job exclaimed, rapturously. "No sham whale this time!" he added, as, after squinting for a few seconds through the glass, he handed it to the boys.

"Blame it all! if she comes this way, blazes! but I'll put a hole through her!" he continued.

The boys watched the huge monster as it flopped its great tail and dived to and fro among the billows, quite evidently thoroughly enjoying the sport as every now and then it sank from view to reappear in another spot. Job, however, was disappointed; it did not give him an opportunity to carry out his threat, but kept at a safe distance from the vessel. Soon the sky, beginning to cloud over, he discovered that as skipper he would have enough to do attending to the vessel and preparing for a storm.

"Although," as he expressed himself, "this storm would probably not amount to a row of pins," yet as an insurance agent would advise, Job believed in "taking no risks."

By nightfall a light rain had commenced to fall, but the wind not being too strong they were enabled to hold their course. Indeed, by the time the next watch came on deck the bright stars were shining and all was clear above them. And now for a week or two they pursue their uninterrupted way without incidents of further importance attending their voyage. Touching at Rio Janeiro they replenished their supplies, laying in some fresh meat and also some salt pork, and taking aboard several barrels of water. With these necessary additions they then resumed their voyage. They had not proceeded very far from the port before Job, who had been conversing with Jack at the bow, turned and walked aft to where Charley, who held the wheel, was gayly chatting with his comrades, Frank being seated on a coil of rope and Dick upon the anchor.

Leaning against the capstan, Job informed them that the vessel was once more entering the tropics, "and," he continued, after a short pause, "I hope we may have as good weather and be as well favored by fortune as we have been hitherto. As you very well know, perhaps, it is not unusual in this region for the wind suddenly to die out and a dead calm to set in. Not that our food and water supply will not hold out, but then no true sailor cares to lie idle here for a month or over, as is sometimes the case."

"Well," said Dick, "if you are going to give us a long stay hereabouts, with plenty of rest for the weary, you will have to furnish some amusement, for I can tell you I'm beginning to feel pretty dull already."

"Yes," put in Frank, "you will have to tell us that long, long story you promised some time ago."

"There, my hearties, you will have to be more careful. Remember," Job continued, in a tone of mock reproof, "I never tell long stories. Expect little or nothing, therefore, and you will not be disappointed."

"Well, I suppose we will, in that respect, have to accede to your wishes," replied Dick: "but verily, I have been put to sleep before this by so-called short stories. "Present company, of course, excepted," he added humorously.

"I can remember," Dick continued, "an old doctor whom I used frequently to visit, when a small boy, and whose conclusions were often so much longer than the story itself, that actually my father used to have frequently to poke me in the ribs to keep me in a sound and wide-awake condition."

"Well," said Job, "if you can believe it, "I had a still stranger experience. I went one day to a choice concert—everything quite select, as landlubbers would say—high-toned and classical, and actually, some of them said, I nearly raised a panic by starting up, right at the critical moment, in a

nightmare. Why," Job went on, observing how deeply impressed the boys were with his narrative, "I used to know a hardy, hearty old chap, who used to fairly drown the church choir with his loud snoring, not being disturbed at all by their musical efforts. But enough of this," he continued, bringing down his fist. "A long story is too cheap for me, and its main points too often forgotten. When the right time comes, boys, why then you shall have a story, but not till then. In a short time, say when we are safely over the Equator, I will give you a brief account of the sea-serpent that once wriggled its devious course before my astonished vision! How would that fill the bill, think you?"

"Why, excellent!"

"The very thing!" the boys responded almost in a breath.

"That is," Dick added, "with the proviso that you do not impart too wild a flavor. Moderation in all things for me!"

CHAPTER IX.

Two or three weeks after the conversation as above related, the *Sightly*, about the end of September, after having been becalmed several times in her course, and impeded once or twice by unfavorable winds, crossed the equatorial circle with all her canvas on, before a light but steady wind. Job and Frank, as lookout and steersman respectively, were on deck, the others were below.

"Those chaps have been below a considerable time, I think," said Job, calling aloud to Frank; "I wonder what is keeping them."

"Well, they told me they were going to see if there was anything left in those old fruit barrels, and I should therefore presume they are now engaged in sampling what remains of their contents."

"How foolish! Why didn't they go to the new barrel which I got in at our last stopping place?" replied Job. "If there is anything left in the bottoms of those old barrels it is surely spoiled by this time," he added.

A few minutes later Charley, followed by Dick and Jack, came up the gangway. Each wore a sour, disgusted expression.

"Frank," at length exclaimed Dick, "the fruit is that ripe we couldn't go it! Here's a pineapple for your share, and you ought to be thankful for that."

"Why didn't you try the new barrel Job took in at Rio Janeiro?" observed Frank.

"Simply because we desired to examine the old ones first."

Approaching Job, who stood scanning the horizon, the latter innocently inquired where they had been.

"Below deck, investigating," answered Charley.

"Well, what has it amounted to?" inquired the hardy old seaman.

"Just this: what little remains in those old fruit-barrels has spoiled," replied Dick. "Of course," he continued, "we did not try those covered over with canvas, potatoes on top. Guess they're the same, though."

"I'm not at all surprised," ejaculated Job, somewhat amused. "Did you think that that fruit would last forever?"

"Not at all," answered Dick; "our sole purpose was to discover its present condition."

"Well, that was perfectly proper, and since you have thus called my attention to the matter, we will before long have to get rid of the truck and rubbish stored up below. But now," continued Job, lightly changing the subject, "it strikes me, that some time ago I promised you a story when we should have passed the Equator?"

"Why, so you did," chimed in the boys together. "Out with it at once!"

"Let us hope," added Dick, "that since we passed the Equator, so long ago, it hasn't taken all this time to prepare for the ordeal."

"Very well," Job responded. "Now then, having a spare moment, keep quiet and I will at once spin my little yarn. Let's see, what was it to be about? (The sea-serpent!) Oh, yes. I had almost forgotten.

"To begin aright, therefore, and without further ceremony," continued Job, leaning against the jib, "let me say that having, in my time, made many

voyages, and having held divers positions on shipboard, a fact of which you are all well aware. I once, several years ago, made a voyage to Holland, as second mate of a large brig, the master of which was a Dutchman, a quiet, phlegmatic little man, and yet at times one of the most violent and obstinate of all contrary mortals that ever I laid eyes on.

"He was by no means a teetotaler either, and his round, red face, plump nose and corpulent body gave ample evidence of the fact.

"On board the vessel, and serving with the crew, were two negroes, hard workers, but very superstitious. These two woolly-headed chaps were quite a source of merriment to the first mate, with whom I bunked, who, being a genuine son of Erin, was full of original humor and native wit.

"Well, one day when about mid-ocean, what should one of these negroes, who was acting as lookout, behold, away at some distance from the vessel, but a long, wavy line, seemingly creeping along the surface of the sea. Now, shortly before this, some of our men had stuffed the poor fellow with horrible stories about the sea-serpent. Thinking, therefore, that at last he beheld the great monster wriggling before him, he shouted out in terror, 'The sea-serpent! the sea-serpent!' and danced around on the deck in a way ludicrous to behold.

"Well, hardly had I and the first mate begun to comprehend what was the matter, ere the other negro appeared, and witnessing with consternation

the strange conduct of his comrade, at once started in to out-do him by his own wild, uncouth behavior. They sang something, I do not exactly remember what. This I do know, however, that intermittently and whenever they could find breath sufficient, they screamed together, 'Tuk 'im awah, afoh he eats de ship! Massa, we're gwine shuah, all gobbled up!' Thus they went on for quite a while.

"'What do you suppose is the matter with the imps?' I asked the first mate, who like myself stood silently contemplating the scene.

"'Sure, they're crazy!' he answered. 'Let's douse them into the water!'

"Looking towards the sea at that moment he, too, happened to espy the wavy line.

"'Look there!' he shouted, as I looked in the direction indicated. 'St. Patrick! I believe they are nearer right than we think them. It's the serpent sure, and no mistake! I'll away to the Captain!'

"Studying the object he had pointed out closely, the black line kept waving to and fro, up and down, at a great rate, thinks I to myself, yonder is, indeed, something extraordinary. Meanwhile the Captain had arrived on the scene, and I could easily perceive from his muddled appearance that, as the saying is, he was half-seas over.

"'Ish it got 'im alrecht? Gif 'im da oder nigger, if he musht haf 'im,' he muttered confusedly. 'Goot-bye!' and away below he went

again before one of us could say 'Jack Robinson.' As to his remarks, I never was able to quite comprehend their import, unless that by them he wished us to understand that we were to throw the negroes overboard and thus appease the monster.

"Perhaps, his worthy first officer, having by his account of the matter confused him somewhat, he had concluded that the serpent regarded the negroes as his rightful prey. At any rate, his words had by no means a soothing effect on the two negroes, who now leaped about as though they had suddenly received an electric shock.

"The mate, who was rarely nervous, now came towards me, and noticing that he was all of a tremble, I requested him to give me the glass, which he had brought up from below. Taking it and placing it to my eye, I studied attentively the long black line that had created the disturbance. 'It is leaving us,' I simply said; 'it's getting less and less.' As I said this I handed back the glass, without further comment.

"Strange to say, my words had a tranquilizing effect upon the dancing, prancing black men, and the mate, picking up a bucket, soused them until they became sober."

"And was it really a sea-serpent?" inquired Dick, whose belief in the incredible was truly remarkable.

"Why, no; of course, not! A sea-serpent would hardly act as that one did!"

"Well, what was it then?"

"Guess!"

"A ship's mast!" suggested Charley. "You know we mistook that once for a whale!"

"No, nothing of the sort; and since you can't guess it, it was only a flock of sea-fowls that thus furnished us with a sea-serpent! A flock of birds, like a cloud, flying so close that they seemed as one object, sometimes almost resting on the surface of the water, at other times bunching and rising upwards. It was a curious sight."

"I should think so," each of his deeply interested hearers rejoined.

"Boys," Job continued, laying his hand on Dick's shoulder, "were it not that our cruise has been such a long one, we would ere this have had a visit from old Neptune on crossing the line of the Equator. He rarely lets his novices off, I can tell you; however, as we are so well on our way, and as he did not visit you the first time, he will not visit you now."

"Oh," said Jack; "it's just as well he didn't trouble himself. Frank and I have made his acquaintance already."

"So have I," said Charley, "and as for Dick, he don't know where he's been; his father may have introduced him to the old fellow long ago!"

"Well, then," replied Job, "we are all true blue; all the right stuff, and now," he continued, "if this wind from the southwest lasts, we may hope to make good time on our homeward stretch."

"Job," Charley presently ventured, "I have often wanted to put into a Mexican port, just for the fun of the thing, and since we carry no treasure, but are out for health and pleasure, suppose we put into Tampico Bay?"

"Tampico Bay!" Job responded. "Very well; you could hardly have selected a better time. As a rule, Mexican ports, being unhealthy, I do not care to visit them: but if, as you say, you are out for pleasure, and as about this time of the year, or in a month or so, by which time we ought to be up in the Gulf stream, nothing is to be apprehended on the score of health from such a visit, I will consult my charts, and if the weather holds out accede to your wishes."

CHAPTER X.

About three or four weeks after the conversation related above, Job, true to his word, guided the *Sightly* through the Mexican Gulf, and in a few days she glided into the bay which skirts the Mexican city of Tampico, and bears its name.

All on board were quite hopeful and happy, but for some cause or other a change, hardly observable to a mere stranger, had come over the party. For some reason, their only desire now was to sail for home. Every once in a while they would eagerly and uninterruptedly discuss in quiet, some matter

or subject which evidently gave them much pleasure. Yet it might well be surmised, from their animated, exuberant spirits, their bright eyes twinkling with excitement, that something of an unusual nature had happened. And something had occurred, too.

The reader may, perhaps, need to be reminded here of the conversation which occurred some time before this, respecting the old fruit barrels, wherein Job expressed a determination to rid the vessel of their contents. With these old barrels one of the principal and most important events of the *Sightly's* cruise is closely connected. One day, shortly after they had entered the Gulf of Mexico, there being nothing else to do, Job suggested that the hold be looked to, and that all worthless or refuse matter, especially the old fruit barrels, be brought up and dumped overboard. This work the boys immediately proceeded to accomplish.

Jack and Charley together, having rolled the barrels to the side of the vessel, had raised one barrel, intending to throw its contents overboard, and to utilize the same as a receptacle for the potatoes, which, canvas and all, they had previously removed, when all at once Dick, who was then standing near by watching these proceedings, sprang forward and called upon them to stop, as at the same moment a heavy object with a bright, shining surface, rolled across the bottom.

"Boys! Charley! Jack! What's this?" he cried, as he dived down into the barrels.

Another second and he emerged with a large, richly embossed, solid silver plate. Astonished almost beyond measure at such a startling discovery, and with good reason conjecturing that the rest of the barrels might contain treasure, they went to work more cautiously than before. And well they did so, for every one of the old fruit barrels was found to contain, deep down at the bottom, rich treasure—gold cups, silver-plate and tankards, old Spanish currency, etc. Even jewelry, diamond rings, pearl necklaces, richly wrought metallic chains and bracelets, met their ecstatic gaze.

When they had at last concluded their search, and nothing further could be uncovered and brought to light, fully one-fourth of the barrel which had been emptied for its reception, contained a glittering, precious store.

"Wonderful!" all exclaimed, as they stood around it.

"Yes," said Charley, picking out from the head a sparkling gem, "this is a true stone, too!"

"'Tis a queer transaction throughout," remarked Job reflectively.

"Who would have supposed that those old fruit-barrels contained such an exceedingly valuable collection?" exclaimed Dick. "Our cruise, at last, has unexpectedly fulfilled our expectations."

"One thing yet remains for us to do," observed Job, as if in answer to this latter remark, "it will hardly be proper for us to consider it our own until we have found out something further respecting it."

"What would you infer from its being so singularly concealed?" inquired Charley. "Do you believe it has been surreptitiously obtained?"

"Yes," replied Job; "it may be, however, since I have heard of like instances, that its former possessors fell,upon it by chance in shore, and were seeking to evade the vigilance of the Mexican authorities, who claim all such wealth on behalf of the government. One thing I would advise: we will have to be very cautious in port concerning this prize. If what I have just hazarded should prove the case, so that we may legitimately consider the treasure ours, then no time is to be lost—we must immediately put to sea."

"What do you mean by their falling upon it by chance?" inquired Dick. "That it had previously been stolen?"

"No; I mean that it may have been long-buried treasure, discovered and unearthed."

"Is that very frequent?"

"Yes; in some sections of the country, especially in the old Spanish or French provinces. "You see," Job continued in explanation, "shortly before the overthrow of Maximilian and his empire, those of the rich Dons and French nobles who could do so, buried their wealth or hid it in the walls of their chateaus and left the country. Nor is that all; as you well know, many of the wealthy and influential settlers have, in like manner, been forced since then to emigrate, owing to the frequent internal disorders to which the government is subject."

"Remember now," said Job, abruptly concluding his remarks, "one thoughtless word spoken may arouse the suspicions of the government officers, and subject not only our treasure, but also the yacht, to seizure!"

"Do not let that concern you," the boys responded reassuringly; you can rely upon us to keep the matter secret. Who, now, is to conduct the inquiries?"

"I will manage that," answered Job; "leave it to me."

Well satisfied with this arrangement, the little group broke up, those not required for the management of the vessel carrying out the task already undertaken. Within two or three days after the discovery above outlined, the empty barrels having been carried below and stowed away in the hold, the little yacht entered and anchored in Tampico Bay, as we have previously described. Hardly had they arrived when a boat containing custom house officers came alongside.

"Dick," whispered Job, "you have placed that barrel the furthest in of the lot, have you? Our visitors may wish to examine the hold!"

"Yes, I have done so, and have covered it with the potatoes," replied Dick softly.

"Oh, all right then," answered Job, as he hurried off to welcome the officers aboard, "our doubts must soon be settled."

Shaking the Mexican's extended hand, he now inquired whether he could be of any service. This

question having been duly interpreted to him by one who acted as an interpreter, the officer quickly replied to it in Spanish.

"We would like to know," said the interpreter, after a quizzical stare at the boys, "what vessel this is, and her business?"

"American pleasure yacht *Sightly*," replied Job, "from the Pacific."

"Ah!" his interlocutor ejaculated, then turning towards the Mexican officer he glibly translated the answer into Spanish.

Facing Job again, he asked permission to examine the hold.

"Certainly," Job replied, leading the way.

In five minutes, their curiosity satisfied, the Mexicans again stood upon the deck.

"Pardon me, Senor," the Mexican officer said, in pretty fair English, much to Job's surprise, as he prepared to retire over the side, "we have put you to much trouble, but our duty requires it, since there is a strange story afloat respecting the carrying off of some treasure!"

"From where?" answered Job.

"From an old deserted chateau, in the province of Zacatecas."

"Come, let's hear the entire story," replied Job, "and since you speak such admirable English, let's break a bottle of port together!"

"Agreed!" the officer graciously responded: "but I must not stop long, my orders respecting incoming vessels are very strict."

Retiring below to the cabin, Job brought out a bottle of prime old port; in fact, the only one he possessed. Pouring out a glassful of the liquor, he handed it to his guest, who after a few sips, addressing his host, related the following:

"Formerly, many years ago, up to the time of the empire, so it is said, there used to dwell in Zacatecas, Mexico, in a retired and lonely chateau, not far from the city of that name, an old Spanish countess, somewhat erratic, but immensely wealthy, who with her servants led a singularly solitary existence, cut off apparently from friends, relatives or neighbors. Well, when war broke out, and carnage and destruction swept all around her, the old lady, ordering her attendants, who were devotedly attached to her, to bury all her riches, having gathered together sufficient for her own needs, and leaving to her servants a considerable sum, attempted to leave the country. She, however, failed in that which her servants quite readily accomplished. Journeying to the coast by a lonely, unfrequented road, her party was suddenly set upon by highwaymen, and the old lady, thoroughly frightened by the confusion which ensued, being very corpulent, was all at once seized with an apoplectic fit, and nothing being done to relieve her, the rest having fled, expired just as the robbers approached. Be that as it may, however, many years have passed since these events occurred, and although our government, suspecting that the wealth

lay buried in or about the old chateau, has frequently endeavored to locate the treasure, it has repeatedly failed.

"Some months ago, the government received from an official the intelligence that three men had visited the old chateau, had discovered a considerable proportion of the buried treasure, and with it in their possession had suddenly departed.

"Plans were laid to intercept these men, but notwithstanding all our precautions, disguised as fruit-traders they eluded our watchfulness and escaped to the coast. Here, it seems, they had a small fruit-vessel moored some distance out from land. One day, about the time when we had at last struck their trail, having carried their plunder out to her, in barrels half-filled with fruit, they rowed ashore, little knowing that they were thereby to lose their last opportunity to escape. Perhaps, owing to the threatening atmosphere and the violent storm which came up soon after, they feared to venture forth. At any rate, when morning dawned they were in the hands of the authorities, with the exception of the man whom they had left in the boat. The officers, who had been sent to arrest this individual, in spite of the fierce, raging storm and the dark night, attempted his capture also, but with firm, steady stroke, rowing out through the breakers in the direction of the vessel, he was soon lost to sight.

"When morning dawned the fruit-vessel was gone. Whether the man reached her and put to

sea alone, or whether she had been torn from her fastenings and swept away by the tempest, we never discovered. But one clue, and that a poor one, was developed. A small row-boat, similar to the one in which the man was last seen, a few days after that was picked up further down the beach, battered and almost broken to pieces. And such is the story," the officer concluded as, rising to his feet, he quaffed the last of the wine.

"Another glass?" urged Job.

"Well," said the officer, "and then I must go. And," he continued, taking the proffered glass and draining it dry, "since the government desired these particulars suppressed, on no account reveal this story. By-the-by," he continued, laying his hand on Job's shoulder, when he had reached the side, and his men were impatiently waiting to shove off, "you did not run across a drifting fruit-boat? Oh, how could you?" he added, not noticing Job's perturbation, "you say you are just in from the Pacific?"

"Yes, from a long voyage," replied Job, much relieved.

"Well, a pleasant and safe continuance," the officer politely answered, as, stepping down over the side, his boat shot off.

"Good riddance!" thought Job, although he discreetly said nothing.

"Boys," he continued, when their visitors had

at last fairly disappeared from view, "it is as I have surmised; the riddle is solved! Up anchor and off!"

Lifting in the anchor, and setting sail, they were soon again off and afloat. Crowding on all the canvas, they were soon well out in the Gulf and beating out towards the Atlantic. Nor did they breathe safely until, six days afterwards, the coast of Cuba was sighted.

CHAPTER XI.

It was a bright, pleasant, sunshiny day, in the month of October, when the *Sightly*, skimming over the blue billows of the Atlantic, entered and anchored in the harbor of Havana. Upon all sides a beautiful panorama met the view. All around were large ships, under way, going, or coming.

"Well," said Job, as the boys, almost entranced, stood gazing upon this scene, "Havana is a well-situated place, and from here it has a strikingly lovely appearance, too, but for all that give me, for really true architectural beauty, the city of Buenos Ayres, which, although not so well situated, perhaps, as a seaport, has been laid out and decorated more judiciously and with considerably better art and finish. With its fine marble edifices, its well-adapted public and government buildings, its palatial stone residences, its tastefully adorned and

ornamented churches, their towering, lofty spires glistening in the light; it seems, in the distance, the very abode of earthly splendor and magnificence. Then, too, when you consider its wide avenues and spacious thoroughfares, together with its generally prosperous condition, why it is one of the grandest, greatest cities in the western hemisphere!"

"I am sorry now, since we had such a good opportunity, that we did not stop there," exclaimed Charley.

"So am I," replied Job, "riding on the broad swells of the La Plata, I would have thoroughly enjoyed once more to have beheld such a vista of almost perfect beauty."

"What we have missed this time," remarked Dick, "we must make up for again."

"Job," now interrupted Charley, thoughtfully, "do you think you would care to stay in port four or five days or so? There is, on the other side of the island, at Gorda, a rich planter with whom my father was at one time intimately acquainted. If you and the rest are willing, I should like to pay him a visit?"

"I guess for that length of time," replied Job, "we can allow you to part company; what say the others?"

"Certainly," assented Jack and Frank together, finding themselves thus appealed to; as for Dick,

grasping his friend's hand, as he turned to go below, he wished him, in addition, a happy journey and a safe return.

The next day, having complied with all the necessary formalities prescribed by the jealous Spanish government, Charley having been rowed ashore by Dick and Jack, extended his hand and bidding them farewell, set out upon his journey. His friends stood watching him till he was lost from sight, and then returned to the vessel.

Let us follow him, as taking the road leading from the city, stick in hand, he trudged towards his destination. At length, about the middle of the third day, having traveled as speedily as possible, aided sometimes by a passing wagon or cart, he espies, situated amidst rich plantations, the house or residence of his friend.

We will not here dwell upon his introduction into the happy family circle, the surprise his visit occasioned, nor will we narrate the cordial reception which he received, or enter upon the conversation which followed. Uninteresting as such general topics usually are, we will now turn from them to what more especially concerns the individual.

The next morning, taking an early stroll with the son of the Spanish Don, who was thoroughly conversant with the English tongue, the following colloquy ensued :

"So," said Pedro, "you have been to the Pacific?"

"Yes," replied Charley.

"Saw a good many sights, eh?"

"Yes, I should say so."

"Did you meet with anything remarkable, or have any thrilling experiences?"

"Thrilling? You may well say so, since we fell in with the wild natives once or twice, and were compelled to give them something which they will not very likely forget."

"Is that so? Well now, do you know, I have all along believed that no place in the wide world was worse than this!"

"Why, how so?" responded Charley. "One would naturally suppose you enjoyed the advantages of good government here."

"Well, hardly. The government is altogether too suspicious for one thing, and you know what that leads to."

"Discord and discontent?"

"Yes; there is at present, and not very far from here either, a band of bold outlaws, numbering some ten or twelve desperadoes. These keep the settlements in constant alarm, every now and then sweeping down on some unprotected plantation and making off with the owner, whom they hold for a ransom. Fortunately, my father has some good and tried servants, who would readily resist an attack, so that so far they have not ventured to try it."

"Why do not the Guards attempt their capture? I should think they could easily disperse them."

"They have done so several times, but somehow they always manage to get together again, and lately, having been victorious in one or two skirmishes with the Guards, they openly defy them. Hist!" he continued, breaking off; "did you not hear a noise from behind those bushes over there?"

"No," said Charley.

"Well," said his companion, quickening his steps, "we have already wandered quite a distance; suppose we return?"

"Just as you say," remarked Charley, carelessly.

Their walk had led them through several orchards, beneath a grove of palm trees, down into a sort of natural grotto, formed in part of solid rock and surrounded by thick rose bushes, with here and there a banana or an orange tree, around whose roots lofty ferns waved and nodded in the breeze.

Ascending the green sward which led down into this spot, Pedro all at once stopped, and drawing him aside, whispered in an agitated voice, "I saw something move just then, in among the ferns! What will we do? I fear we are pursued by the brigands! Yes, see! there's one," he continued, laying his hand on Charley's arm.

"I'll tell you what to do," said Charley, as looking back he beheld, notwithstanding some effort at concealment, the figure of a man behind a mossy hedge not fifty yards distant; "you, of course, know the country much better than I do. Do you

now take some other road, which will lead them off from this, and then speed for the house; while I make the best time possible along this."

No sooner said than done, and Pedro, wishing his adviser farewell, shot away in another direction. Immediately a loud shout or halloo sounded in their ear. Charley, looking over his shoulder as he ran, observed a number of rough-looking men coming towards him. He thereupon redoubled his speed, and like a race-horse endeavored to elude them. Every moment increasing the distance, he gradually became more and more sanguine of reaching the mansion, when, unfortunately, looking over his shoulder just at that moment, he caught his foot in some tangled vines, tripped and fell, spraining his ankle. Ere he could disengage himself and rise from the ground, his pursuers, with an exulting shout, pounced upon him.

Well, I suppose I will have to submit!" he soliloquized.

Binding their prisoner's arms, his captors now, at a rapid pace, retraced their steps. On, on they went, till Charley almost sank from pain and exhaustion. For some time they had traveled along in this manner through a rich country, the like of which Charley had never before seen. Soon, at last, however, from his captors' gestures, he comprehended that they were nearing the rendezvous.

Leaving the road which leads to Cienfuego, after a long and wearisome march over rather

broken ground, Charley finally caught glimpses of water—glimpses of the blue ocean—stretching out before him. Oh, how he yearned to be once more safely aboard the yacht! What, too, would Job and his companions say? Would they ever hear of him again, a lonely prisoner held by a band of abandoned desperadoes? Liberty, how little, he once thought, he would prize it so dearly!

With such reflections as these, Charley resolutely prepared to face the worst. Having now, in the course of their journey, arrived at a steep and precipitous incline, his captors proceeded more leisurely until, reaching a point where the rocky flint seemed to bar their further progress, they suddenly, without pausing, pushed aside the ferns and bushes at its base and entered a long, gloomy cavern. Charley's surprise at this may be better imagined than described, when he found himself in an open space, say thirty feet by ten, surrounded by six of the roughest, most villainous looking men he had ever laid eyes on. Pushing him into one of its darkest, gloomiest corners, they now prepared for their noonday or evening repast. Hanging a pot containing some meat, gypsy fashion, over some dry leaves and twigs, they lit a fire and proceeded to boil it, together with some vegetables, which one of their number had just brought in. Hardly had this been done, ere four others of the party entered, whom Charley, from their sullen, dissatisfied appearance, rightly judged were those from whom his friend, more fortunate than himself, had escaped.

After sharing their meal in silence, one of the band drew from his sash a dirty pack of cards, and with these they proceeded to amuse themselves, drinking at times from a leather jug, and carousing until near midnight. The one, however, who had been set to watch him, although he had ravenously devoured the morsel which fell to his lot, took no part in these after proceedings, yet it was quite evident that but for his captive he would otherwise have done so. Untying Charley's limbs, and placing before him some of the same rough fare which he himself had just eaten, he urged him by pantomimic gestures to partake thereof.

Charley, who under ordinary circumstances, would probably have rejected such a dish, yet now, feeling both tired and hungry, saw fit to comply, and shortly afterwards, becoming very drowsy, fell fast asleep, dreaming he was once more at sea, and pitching about in a terrific hurricane.

How long he slept, he knew not, but when he awoke, somewhat refreshed, it was early dawn, the bright, yellow sunshine streaming through the green foliage at the entrance. Mingled with the feeling of relief that his dream, after all, was but a fiction, he experienced a deep sense of disappointment when he comprehended once again his true position.

What a change, too, had been produced in his outward appearance! He went to sleep in the habiliments of English or American costume; he

now woke up a thorough Spaniard—wide pantaloons, cloak, sombrero and all. This, then, was what had subjected him to nightmare.

The most of the band, Charley now became aware, had already departed, some few only being about; and yet, from the restlessness of these, Charley plainly perceived that, for some reason or other, they were ill at ease.

About noon the rest returned and the observances of the preceding day were again gone through with; with less noise, however, and more alert watchfulness than before. Thus, for three days, this daily programme was enacted, while Charley, every day growing more and more heartsick of the monotony, seriously contemplated making an escape.

"But, how could it be done, with one or two armed sentinels continually lurking about? No!" he at length felt compelled to admit, having studied the matter carefully, as well as his chances of ultimate success therein, "it is an impossibility and I must not attempt it."

One thing which he had already noticed gave him considerable satisfaction and that was that the bandits, day by day, were becoming more and more anxious.

Upon the fourth day, late in the afternoon, he repeatedly heard, as he thought, shots fired at no great distance away. Perhaps a rescue! he argued to himself. Hardly had he thus commenced to reason ere several of the band, one or two wearing

bandages over apparently fresh wounds, entered, and after a hurried, animated conversation, prepared for a sudden departure. One who appeared to be the leader, entering soon after, pointed to Charley and in a low voice gave some few directions in Spanish, which the rest immediately proceeded to put into execution. Binding his arms, as before, they then waited until darkness had fairly set in, whereupon, placing a bandage over his eyes, they then set out from the cave. Traveling by many and devious paths Charley at length discerned from the faint, briny odor, that they were advancing towards the sea.

CHAPTER XII.

LET us now, in this chapter, return to the yacht and those aboard of her. For awhile the boys amused themselves by rambles through the city and along shore, but at length, growing tired of this, impatiently awaited with Job their companion's return.

Four, five days pass, and still no signs of Charley. Anxiously they now scan all points of the shore, yet still he comes not. Upon the sixth day a little boat puts off from the shore, and running in close under the bow a fine looking Spaniard, hailing Job politely, inquires: "Is this the *Sightly*, friend?"

"Yes! what's wanted?" responded Job.

"I have here a message for you," he replied, at the same time taking the missive from his embroidered sash and handing it up to Job.

"Thank you," replied Job, taking it and touching his hat, as the stranger was rapidly rowed away from the vessel. Breaking the seal, he opened the note and forthwith spread it out before him.

"Boys!" he ejaculated the next moment, the color for an instant leaving his face, "here's news, indeed! What do you think has happened to Charley?"

"What, nothing serious?" they interrogated, in one breath, as they gathered around him.

"Well, I am sorry to say it is, and something very serious, too!" answered Job. "Charley, it seems, has in some way or other been captured by the Brigands of Cienfuego and they now hold him, expecting a ransom! Wait, I will read the letter," he continued.

"'*Yacht Sightly.* GORDA, Oct. 8th, 18—.

JOB NORTON, Master:

You will perhaps be as grieved to learn this as I am to relate it, but your young friend, Charley Dalton, while out taking a stroll yesterday morning with my son, was captured by the Brigands of Cienfuego, and is now held awaiting a ransom. These men are a bold, resolute set of hardened villains, who have long eluded the vigilance of our officers. Notwithstanding this, however, I have communicated with the authorities, and they have since informed me that they will do what they can.

(Signed) Yours truly,

SANTO SEBANADO.'"

"'P. S.—Since the Brigands are said to possess a small sail boat, through which beforetimes they have frequently made good their escape, it might perhaps be advisable for the *Sightly* to co-operate.'"

"What say you, boys," concluded Job, "shall we attempt a rescue?"

"Yes, by all means," the boys responded, with one accord.

"Well, then, so be it, and if we should cross that boat of their's we will either take her or send her to the bottom."

"Charley and all?" put in Dick.

"No! How stupid you talk!" retorted Job.

"Ho! hoist anchor immediately," he continued, "shake out the sails."

The boys quickly obeyed, and hastening away to execute these orders the *Sightly* was soon, in a short space of time, cleaving her way through the blue waters of the Atlantic.

Not to be taken suddenly unawares the boys, having first loaded both cannon brought from below, their rifles and other firearms, and charging them also, placed them where in case of emergency they could readily be found.

Towards the close of the second day the *Sightly*, rounding the western end of the island of Cuba, the boys sighted and immediately headed for Xagma Bay, near whose shores they confidently expected to gain some tidings of their unfortunate friend, or at least to discover some sign of the brigands.

Running more closely in along the land, with barely sufficient light to distinguish objects thereupon, Job, who stood, spy-glass in hand, at the bow, keenly viewing the shore, with its numerous

indentations, discerned near the mouth of a small creek what at first he took to be a white canvas tent, but which upon a more careful scrutiny he perceived was none other than a sail-boat, answering somewhat the description of the one which the brigands were said to possess. It was closely hauled up to shore, and in part screened by some trees and bushes which, in spite of a rather rough soil, flourished at that point luxuriantly. Darkness descending upon them, however, put an end to further observations. What was to be done?

Job, calling the boys forward, communicated to them the nature of the discovery he had just made, with his suspicions respecting the same, and asked for advice, which was readily given.

All were in favor of continuing their course on towards shore, and thus, if possible, preventing any attempt at escape. This being unanimously resolved upon, was accordingly carried into effect.

Not caring at this crisis to reveal their designs at all, or to arouse any suspicions, they concluded not to hang out their lights, but to steer slowly in without. Finally, coming across a twin indentation in the shore, partly hid from view by some palm-trees, through open spaces in which, however, they could clearly make out the white sails and a portion of the hull of the other craft as it floated in the little creek, directly across from the narrow neck of land on the one side, and under which the *Sightly* lay, Job and the boys, with feverish anxiety, marked her position, and waited.

How long they must have thus waited, with ears and eyesight strained, they never knew. At length, about midnight, Job imagined he heard the sound of muffled oars right near them. The boys thought so, too ; but not seeing anything, and the sound dying out, they concluded that they must have been mistaken.

Not long after this, however, a shrill call or whistle sounded from some point along the shore. Immediately afterwards they were astonished to hear the crack-crack of rifles.

"They must surely be pursued," ventured Dick, as he leaned over the side.

"Yes," Job whispered cautiously, as, glass in hand, he waited for something further to develop.

"Any signs of them yet?" Jack queried.

"No; all is as still as can be. Not a soul apparently aboard of her yet. Ah! but hist!"

"What's that now?" he continued, laying his heavy hand on Jack's shoulder. "Boys, they're there; I can see them now as they climb aboard! Take in the bow anchor! Let us once get under way and we may cut off their retreat," he whispered hoarsely.

The boys did so, and while the vessel was rounding the long, jutting point, prepared for the engagement which each felt must surely follow. There was no cowardice, however; they had each resolved to do or die in the attempt to rescue their comrade.

One thing, however, to them a source of hearty congratulations, and which they contemplated with much satisfaction, was the fact that they were very likely now, whatever their efforts and whatever the result, to have the active co-operation of the authorities.

They could clearly make out, from the noise on shore, as well as from an occasional rifle-shot, that some sort of a skirmish was progressing. At first the reports sounded rather distant, as if from a point away and back from the shore, gradually approaching nearer and nearer. Soon they could hear the snapping of branches, until, just as they rounded the narrow point, by the bright, silvery light of the moon, which had previously been hidden from view by dark clouds, but which now cast a bright gleam over the rippling waves, they could plainly observe a sail boat putting out from shore containing several men, who had evidently, from the haste with which they had previously shoved off, "not stood," as Shakespeare says, "much upon the order of their going." Several rifle reports, ringing out about one and the same time from behind the dark fringed bank which they had so lately left, with all sails set the *Sightly* gave chase.

Let us now for a brief interval return to Charley Dalton, whom the reader will recollect had been forced, by the watchfulness of his captors, to give up his schemes of escape. When we last parted

from him he was being led blindfolded down a rather steep incline, growing, as he advanced, less and less perceptible as he approached what his alert senses told him was the sea. But for an occasional sharp, quick ejaculation of caution or advice which every now and then fell from the lips of the leader, they in general pursued their way in uninterrupted silence. Suddenly, however, a halt was ordered and a consultation held, after which the band seemed to break up into sections, the one which Charley was in pushing on cautiously but resolutely for the shore. They had thus in this manner progressed for perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, when, all at once, a call or whistle sounded at no great distance away; the same signal, here be it said, which those aboard of the *Sightly* also heard and profited by. This was almost immediately followed by the sharp report of a rifle, at the sound of which Charley's captors quickened their steps, correctly surmising that they were now being closely pursued.

Soon after this, being dragged hastily along, Charley stumbled clumsily over a bush or vine of some kind, and his captors at that same instant releasing their hold upon him, he lost his balance and fell flat upon the ground. Being almost smothered by the luxuriant vegetation he nevertheless at the same time heard, like the sound of running footsteps, followed by one or two rifle reports, near at hand; nay, almost over the very spot where he had fallen. Momentarily, at first, he felt like shouting out and so making his presence known. The

next moment the recollection of his strange plight dawned upon him and he wisely concluded to remain silent. Then, for the first time, he fully realized his danger. In his present garb, resembling in all points one of the Brigands, what was there to prevent the officers or guards from taking him for one, and, in the dark, amidst the excitement of the skirmish, riddling him with bullets without affording him any opportunity to explain his situation. Instead, therefore, of hailing his deliverers with delight and rejoicing at their near presence, he dreaded their approach. After a while, however, except for an occasional shot, all became silent. Working away at the rope which pinioned his arms, and which had become slightly loosened by his fall, he eventually freed himself, and rising from the ground in a spirit of thankfulness at having so readily regained his liberty, he threw off his sombrero and cloak, and being guided by the shots, rapidly yet cautiously made his way to the shore. Lying behind a clumb of bushes he peered out over the little bay. The moon emerging from behind some dark clouds at the same moment enabled him the better to comprehend the nature of the scene which was now being enacted before him. There, in a little sail boat right out before him and but a little piece from shore, were some eight or ten men in whom he readily recognized those from whom he had so lately and so agreeably parted company.

Along the shore at intervals he could dimly perceive figures darting about hither and thither, while

from behind some dark bush or hedge would occasionally come the flash and report of some firearm or other, to be answered frequently by another from the boat. He observed, also, that the dark figures on shore, the guards, as he clearly discerned them to be, were making frantic efforts to launch a small row-boat and give chase. While thus intently contemplating the scene before him he all at once beheld a fair sized vessel, a yacht, glide out from beyond the outermost point of the opposite shore of the little bay and head for the shore, evidently purposing to cut off the further flight of the Brigands. To his surprise, although the moon had again become part hidden by the clouds, he recognized this vessel to be none other than the *Sightly*.

An exclamation of delight burst from his lips. So, thought Charley, my friends are nearer than I had supposed them ! Perceiving that the sail boat was now tacking inshore to avoid as much as possible the other vessel which was nevertheless steadily diminishing her distance, and that their present course, if continued, would bring both vessels pretty close to a point of land which projected out into the sea not very far from where he stood. Charley thereupon hurried along the shore until he reached the farthest point of this narrow strip, whence from behind a little rock he watched the two vessels approach.

"Ha ! they will hardly escape this time," Charley muttered to himself as both vessels, the

smaller leading the way, now neared the point. "Still, it is likely," he furthermore soliloquized, "that if the sailboat doubles this point the Brigands may yet escape."

"Here goes," he continued aloud, throwing off his clothes and diving into the sea just as the loud report of the *Sightly's* cannon fell upon his ear. Being a good swimmer and having carefully calculated both time and distance he was soon under the stern of the *Sightly*, which, following the movements of the other vessel, had now commenced to tack out to sea. Clinging to the chains for awhile he presently heard footsteps above him.

"Hello, there! Dick, Job, anybody. Throw a rope over."

Job, for such it was, astonished beyond measure at hearing his familiar voice so unexpectedly, immediately responded, "Aye! aye! sir!" and suiting the action to the word, not only threw a rope over, but quickly hauled him aboard as well. It was a totally unlooked for but yet a very happy reunion, and Charley received a hearty, enthusiastic welcome from each. However, it was then, as Charley well understood, no time to waste words, as they were now almost up with the other vessel, so receiving from Job a small sabre he prepared for action.

The yacht, as before described, having rounded the point by reason of which she had previously been concealed, had steadily continued on her course, being guided meanwhile chiefly by the

movements of the Brigands, who, as we have already related, were then just setting out from shore. Those on board of the yacht, having become witnesses of the proceedings on shore and having had whatever doubts which might previously have existed as to the identity of the sail boat and her crew conclusively settled, immediately stood in to cut off her retreat in the manner which, as above related, Charley had observed from shore. Now, however, they were but thirty yards distant at the most.

The crew of the *Sightly* had already opened fire upon the little boat in front of them. One of the guns, the larger cannon, having been since loaded, Charley pointed it and with Job's permission fired.

Boom! the other gun roared soon after, both awakening echoes from the land. The first shot, though well aimed, owing to a sudden lurch of the vessel, did but little damage, merely taking off a small portion of the bowsprit. The other shot, however, was much better, shattering the mast. Quickly swabbing out the gun, being now almost upon them, Charley, with a hasty gleam of satisfaction, again pointed and discharged it. This completed what Jack's well directed shot had only partially accomplished, breaking the mast short off and carrying it, canvas and all, over the side.

The sail boat was now at their mercy, but without awaiting any further developments the most of the Brigands firing one last volley, which fortunately flew harmlessly by, leaped into the sea. One

or two, however, were so badly wounded that escape was impossible. Having first made these prisoners and then helped to carry them aboard the yacht, Dick and Frank now looked to their prize. Having taken off the canvas and the ropes the mast was cut away and thrown over the side, whereupon, tying her so that she would drift astern, the boys then boarded the *Sightly*, whose bow once more headed out to sea, Job meanwhile, on account of his prisoners, having resolved nevertheless to make a brief stop at Havana.

CHAPTER XIII.

HAVING in the course of two or three days reached port they lay to long enough to deliver over their prisoners into the custody of the proper authorities, and then, having telegraphed Don Santo of the happy, fortuitous termination of their voyage, they thereupon prepared to resume their homeward way. The next day, having taken in some stores, they were just about to hoist up the anchor, when a small row-boat pulling alongside, a rather aristocratic looking Spaniard hailing Job in pretty fair English inquired if he was the captain.

"Yes," said Job, "what's wanted?"

"Why, I see you have astern there a boat of which I was at one time the happy possessor, but which a gang of rogues and robbers made off with. If you will now return it I will reward you handsomely."

"Well," replied Job, somewhat perplexed by this request, "if she is yours, take her, but I would advise you to be more careful of your property in future."

"Thank you," responded the delighted Spaniard. "Here, too, is her price," he continued, tossing to Job a purse containing gold coin.

Job caught it, and satisfied with the Spaniard's sincerity, immediately threw it back.

"Here, keep it, and the boat, too, for that matter," he replied.

"No, it is yours, and well you deserve it," exclaimed the Spaniard, composedly, as he shoved off with the disabled boat in tow, and suiting the action to the word threw the purse back upon the deck.

"We will consider this, then, in the light of salvage," cried Job, picking it up.

"Anything you like," retorted the Spaniard, who was now at some little distance and whose men were rowing quite lustily.

"Hold on a bit," called Job, "I would like to ask you one or two questions."

"Well, what is it?"

"Did the Guards capture those of the Brigands who swam ashore?"

"Yes, all but one or two. You did well to break up the band. All alike praise your daring courage."

Waving a final adieu to the Spaniard, now well on his way towards the shore, the sails were hauled around to the wind, and the *Sightly* skimming over

the blue waters of the harbor was soon once again on the broad Atlantic. Taking advantage of the gulf stream, two or three weeks passing without further incident or adventure, finds the *Sightly* heading for the New England coast. Soon Cape Cod is sighted and not long after many a familiar object meets the view.

It is a fine morning in the early part of November, and by the side of the little slip, from which they had so gleefully set out several months before, the yacht *Sightly* once more rides at anchor. Her cruise has terminated and there is not now a single soul aboard of her, even old Job having departed to visit his friends and relatives.

As for the boys, they have with much gladness and joy been welcomed back by their friends and kindred, some of whom of the latter especially having worried considerably on their account. However, "all is well that ends well," and in the eyes of the villagers they have acquitted themselves so well that they are quite looked upon as heroes. One thing, notwithstanding, the glory of their late achievement seems tolerably certain. It is not likely that they will soon again undertake another such a cruise.

"It was too long by half," was Jack's reply to his father's query as to how he had enjoyed the trip, and this expression quite fully exemplified not only his own opinion but the general verdict as well.

"It seems to me," Charley remarked one evening

not long after the termination of the voyage, when, in response to a pressing invitation, the boys had met together in the elegant, handsomely decorated parlor of the former's residence, "that our late cruise might well teach us a lesson. That, in fact, our discovery in an old fruit boat, driven by chance off shore, of what I have since been told, will amount in value to thousands of dollars, conclusively proves that mankind, as a rule, too often goes to sea for that which can with much less difficulty be unearthed upon its shore. Here, for instance, leaving the land and not expecting anything therefrom, we sailed away upon the ocean to search its depths for treasure, to brave difficulties and dangers for that which when not far out we had already unknowingly placed aboard, and which had, itself, came out to meet us, having but shortly before laid buried in the earth. Truly, it would seem," he continued, "that the spade is oft times more potent than grappling irons. One thing is quite certainly true of the former, if it does not always develop treasure it does at least develop habits of industry and thrift. What say you ?"

"That we think as you do," exclaimed the boys almost together, "and that for the future Home and its attractions will contain for us treasure sufficient."

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